THE

FOLLOWING

OF

CHRIST.

Divided into Four

BOOKS:

Written in Latin, by the
Learned and Devout Man

Thomas à *Kempis*

CANON-REGULAR
Of the Order of

St. *AUGUSTIN.*

Translated into *English*, and in this last Edition, Reviewed and Compared with several former Editions.

HOLY-ROOD-HOUSE:
Printed by *James Watson*, Printer to His most Excellent MAJESTIES Royal Family and Houshold. 1687.

THE PREFACE To the READER.

AS it is certain, Pious Reader, *that no Book of this sort hath been oftner Re-printed in all the Languages of Christendom, so likewise, I dare assure thee that no Book better deserveth thy Reading. 'Tis the whole treasure of Spirituality shut up in a little Room for thy greater con-*

venience. Supposing therefore thou art not so much a Critick in Devotion, nor so much a slave to the opinion of the World, as to esteem nothing but what is new, I presume thou wilt not blame my small labour, in reviewing, and comparing the several former Editions, for setting forth this last. Accept it therefore, and practise the Contents. Learn to follow Christ, and thou shalt need no other Guide.

THE

THE LIFE OF THOMAS à KEMPIS, Canon-Regular,

Drawn out of many Authors.

THomas à Kempis, was born at *Kempis*, a little Town in the Territories and Dioceſs of *Collen*, whence alſo he took his Name. If you behold his Parents with a Worldly Eye, you will neither diſcover them of noble Blood, nor remarkable wealth; for all their Nobilty was Piety; all their Revenues honeſty of Life. They gained their Bread with the labour of their Hands, and in the Sweat of their Brows, and

lived content of the little they had.

God blessed their Bed with two Boys only, as far as can be gathered in the distance we live from that Age; to wit, *John* and *Thomas*. John the Elder Brother, having finished his Studies at *Daventry*: and by the favour of *Gerard* the Great his acquaintance and familiarity, being instructed in all good demeanour, and having born many Offices in the Order of the Canon Regulars of St. *Windesems* Congregation, happily departed this Life.

Now *Thomas* of whom we speak, was born about the 1380 year of our Lord God: *Urbane* the Sixth holding the Keys, and *Charles* the Fourth weilding the Scepter of the Empire.

After he had past his Childhood under his Parents care; and grew up to be fit for Learning, he was sent to *Daventry*, the Metropolitan City of *Transylvania*, being, as one may gather, about 13 years old. He was drawn to *Daventry* by the renown of one *Florentius* a Pious and Learned Priest, and perfect of the Canon Regulars,

gulars, whom the frequent Troops of Students which came from thence, had made famous. The Studies of Arts and Sciences did so flourish then at that time, that it might be called the *Belgick Athens*.

Being arrived at *Daventry*, his First care was to enquire for his Brother, by whose Counsel and Help (for he had but little or no means) he might be directed how to undertake his Studies. And being commended to Master *Florentius* (for *Gerard* the great deceased in the year 1384. while our *Thomas* was but ye Four years old) he received him with all the humanity possible; providing him of lodging, Books, and Livelyhood.

While the Youth, who was of a good disposition, and honest countenance, had means by this occasion to be conversant amongst famous Men for Piety and Learning, who living in the company of *Florentius* were adorned with Religion, innocency of life, and sincerity of Demeanour: He was seasoned with their manners, with whose conversation he was de-

light-

lighted; being Studious at home, aſſiduous at School; frequent at Church; ſo that in a few years ſpace he made ſuch progreſs in Piety and Learning, as the many Books, never ſufficiently praiſed, Written by him, bear Teſtimony. While he lived in the Colledge of the Canon Regulars, whatſoever he could gain by Writing (for he was a skilful Pen-man) he put it all into the common Purſe.

He was a great Servant of our B. Ladies even from his Child-hood, ſaying certain ſet Prayers every day to her honour. But, as Childrens Piety is always mutable & inconſtant, he began to be cold in this Pious cuſtom. So that by little and little he neglected and deferred his wonted Prayers and Suffrages, firſt to One day, ſoon after to Two or Three, then to Four, at length to a Week, and in the End, alas, he gave over all. In the time of this his coldneſs, he had a Viſion by Night, wherein he conceived himſelf to be, as it were, ſtanding in the Hall by his Maſter *Florentius*: Where, while with other of his School fellows, who flock-

flocked together to hear the word of God, he attentively gave ear to what was said, the Lady of the World, discovered her self unto him coming down from Heaven in a Cloud and descending into the said Hall, where being most Glorious in her Gracious aspect or countenance, and glittering in Attire, she compassed the Brothers who Preached the word of God to the Hearers, and now imbracing one, now another of them, she seemed to render them thanks, that they endeavoured by wholesome admonition, to effect that the price of her dearest Sons precious Blood might not perish in those young Youths. But he beholding what past: and seeing the Virgin blessed amongst women, embrace the foresaid Brothers, stood burning and sweating, melting and hoping: and turning, and firmly fixing his Eyes big with Love, upon her, he said in himself, I will a little expect that when the blessed Virgin shall have sufficiently given testimonies of her love to the rest, she may also out of her benignity daign me with her charitable Embracements;

whom

whom though I could not honour to her worth, yet I endeavoured it according to my weakneſs. But alas, as the firmeſt hopes of Mortals, are often anſwered with the contrary; *Thomas* hoped for a kiſs, a ſweet pledge of Love, but in lieu thereof he met with a ſharp reprehenſion. For the B. Virgin, having ſolaced all thoſe with dear embracements, who with their Pious admonitions did ſeaſon and ripen the flouriſhing ſpring of the multitude of hopeful young Youths, ſhe turned at length towards *Thomas*, and caſting a ſevere and correcting Eye upon him: In vain, quoth ſhe, doeſt thou expect the embracement of ſacred Love, cruel Enemy! who unhappily neglecting my friendſhip, doſt not pay me the wonted and due revenues of thy fervent Prayers. For where are now thy accuſtomed Prayers? whither are thy daily Devotions fled? what now is become of thy aſpirations mixed with Pious Sighs and Tears? Is not Charity waxed cold in thee? Love drowſie? wonted Piety ſhaken? And yet thou, as though to offend were nothing, ſtand-

ſtandeſt audaciouſly expecting Embracements, whoſe actions have earned wrath. And wrathfully withdrawing her countenance: Be gone, quoth ſhe, be gone from me: Thou art judged unworthy of my embracements who neglecteſt to pay ſo eaſie a Tribut of Prayers to thy Beloved. And thus leaving him wounded with ſharp reprehenſions, invironed with Clouds, ſhe diſappeared.

But *Thomas* awaking out of his viſion, examines his Conſcience acknowledges his fault, and promiſes amendment. And leaſt afterwards he might be fruſtrated of the B Virgins embracements, he did in ſuch ſort reſume his neglected Devotion, that he did not from that time to the very laſt period of his life ever omit them any more. O happy reprehenſion, which was forcible to correct Errour; to renew the League of Love, which was in ſome ſort violated; and to wipe away the ſtain of negligence!

Being now much improved by Seven years acquaintance with Maſter *Florentius* and the reſt of the Brethren; and having tried himſelf in all the

the parts and points of all the virtues, he was enflamed with a desire of Religion, the sparks or seeds whereof Master *Florentius* had cast into his Soul. Wherefore in the 1400, in which year *Florentius* afterwards died, our *Thomas* betook himself to the Holy Mountain of St. *Agnes*, situated a little above the City of *Swolle*, where, upon the edge of the River *Vidrun*, there was a Monastry lately begun of Canon Regulars, who lived under St. *Augustins* Rule and Habit. This House was as yet (as the beginning of all things are wont to be little and difficult) very obscure, being hardly known and rarely frequented by any. When he came thither with commendatory Letters from *Florentius*, he was very courteously received of his own Brother, who was the first Priour of the said Monastry: And both of them broke out into that Heavenly acknowledgment: *How good and pleasant a thing it is for Brothers to dwell together!*

Now this Candidate of Religion though he wonderful fervently desired to enter into it: Yet, lest he might

might do any thing too hastily or rashly, he moderated his fervour by a considerate delay, which alone brings forth prudence. And therefore after he had spent Six years in the nature of a Scholar or Prentise, the Sixth year he received the Habit, and at the end of the Seventh, he was solemnly professed. He did shine with a Marvellous Piety toward God: Obedience and observance towards Superiours: Love & good will towards his fellow Brothers. He never gave way to Idleness, the source of Mischief: But was continually employed, either in reading holy Scriptures, Transcribing them for the common use; or in composing some thing of his own: Wherein he did frequently spend what rested of the Night after Matins, yea even with damage to his Bodily health, to the end he might oblige all true lovers of vertue.

The whole Bible divided into Four Tomes, a mighty fair Mass-book, and sundry of St. *Bernards* Opuscules, or little works are extant to this day, Written by him most artificially, and industriously in an excellent hand.

It is hard to express how present

he

he was to himself, and how Reverently he performed the Office of the Church, and all Functions thereto belonging.

While he Sung the Psalms, his aspect was always turned towards the Heavens. Inspired with fervent Zeal, and taken with the incredible sweetness of the Psalms he was observed to be ravished out of himself in an Extasie so that oftentimes he did not stand on the Ground with his heels, but with his tip-toes only touched it, striving to flie into Heaven with the rest of his Body, where he was already in Heart and desire. In Singing he stood always straight up, without ever leaning, either with Back, or Arm upon his seat.

He was always, Day and Night the first that entred, and last that went out of the Church. The Worship of God and the Comliness of his House, did wonderfully delight, and dilate his Heart.

So that while upon a time one said merrily unto him, that he apprehended him happy indeed, and yet not much to be admired, that he

sung

sung the Psalms with such alacrity of voice, and promptitude and Piety of Mind; since *Davids* Psalms were as savory to him, as dainty Salmon; It is thanks be to God, as thou sayest, replyed he, *Psalmi mihi salmones*, which yet are tedious and loathsome to those that are not present, and attentive to what they sing, but spare their breasts and voices.

All his discourse was of God, and the Holy Scripture. When he chanced to be in the Company of Grave and Learned Persons who spoke of Court-businesses, and Worldly affairs, he sat as dumb and ignorant of all the things whereof they Treated, not answering even when he was demanded, unless he were invited thereunto by some remarkable and apparent good. Marry, if there were speech of God, and Heavenly things, being demanded his opinion, he spoke, or rather words flowed from, as continued Brooks sweetly gliding from a clear Crystal Fountain. When he was desired to Preach Extemporally, so he could discover any ones profit in it, he never refused; which yet he would

would not do, till he had first premeditated for a small space or took a short nap. He hath such a faculty in Preaching, that very many moved by the fame thereof, flocked to the Mount of St. *Agnes* out of the Neighbouring Towns and places more remote, with a greedines to hear him.

His Companions did not least admire his resolute sufferance, in joyfully bearing adversities: His patience, not only in easily tolerating, but also benignly excusing other Mens faults; His sobriety in all kinds; Purity of life, and modesty; His care and diligence to advance the profit of the Community, his earnest endeavour to see the Church Beautified and Adorned; his burning Zeal as well as frequency in his Prayers, his Tears plentifully poured out, and other most pregnant proofs of solid Piety. In fine, he had conceived so absolute and inward an hatred of all worldly Vanities, and Allurements, and so Holy a neglect of all transitory things, that he loathed to learn the usual names by which they were called.

And

And least while he Preached well to others, his Body, which doth aggravate the Soul, might have led him Captive to Sin, and he have become a reprobate, he chastised his Body and brought it into Captivity, disciplining himself with a Whip certain days in the Week, singing in the interim *stetit Jesus*.

He was so wedded to the reading of the Holy Scriptures, and to his Cell, that he often both spoke and wrote this saying. *I have sought rest in all things: yet never found it, nisi in angulis & libellis*, that is, in retiredness and reading.

He was so affable and mild, that tho he desired much to fly it, yet was he chosen Subprior even in the flower of his age, by common suffrage. After that he was made perfect of the Oeconomy, or Procurator of the House, because he seemed to be addicted to Almsdeeds, with which charge tho he diligently complied, yet because it hindred him from his pious contemplation, and writing of Books, he was restored to his former Office.

It happened often that while he conversed and discoursed amongst his brethren, he perceived God manifestly spake interiourly to his heart; therefore modestly taking an excuse, as tho he were expected by some, he repaired to his chamber: Where pouring out his heart before God, he drunk up that wisdom, which all devout people admire in his most Excellent books.

Our gracious Lord did also honour his fervour with a heavenly vision: For while he went from the Mount of St. *Agnes* to visit *John Heusden* Prior, who lay sick at *Windesem*, either upon courtesie, or occasion; and consulting with him about some business appertaining to Religion, lodged there that night: He saw in the dawing of the day certain resplendent troops of blessed spirits running with nimble feet, as tho they hastened to some great mans funeral, to convey his happy Soul to their heavenly rest. The truth which he saw, was made good by what he heard: For being wakened by the noise of the table, he leaps out of bed, and

having some sence of what was to happen, he foretold the death of the Prior of *Windesem*.

He learned by experience to despise the Devils dreadfulness and horrour. For when, upon a certain time, that foul beast stood about him in a most ugly and horrid shape, and made towards his bed, he quaked at the first approach of that hideous aspect, not knowing at what defence to put himself against the guile of the dreadful enemy of mankind. At length encouraged by the holy Ghost, he began as well as he could the Angelical salutation or *Ave Maria*, with a trembling voice, as one in fear; But the Devil as tho he had not been moved at all with that salutation drew nearer and nearer unto him quaking with fear till he cryed out *Jesus Christus Amen*. Whereupon the Devil hearing that terrible name, struke as it were with a dreadful thunderbolt, turned away his horrid countenance, and fled away with speed. *Thomas* therefore observing that the Devil durst not stand against the vertue of so powerful a

name,

name, resumed courage, raised his panting Heart, and with iterated cries prosecuted his flying Enemy with the blessed name of *Jesus Christ*. And ever as he redoubled his cries, the foul fiend redoubled his speed. The blessed Man observing this, rendred thanks to God, and said in himself: If by this most Holy Name, *Jesus*, I be able to break down and vanquish the power of Darkness, I will no more, as heretofore I have done, either fear their machinations, through weakness of Faith, or shake under their dreadful menaces.

Yea those other Signs and Miracles, which in divers passages he relates, were done by the Prayers of a Person whom he names not: Were firmly conceived to be done by his own Prayers: as that of the recovering of the Book which was lost in the Cell, and divers other things.

He was of a little more than a middle stature: Of a Manly Shape and Countenance: Of a lively Brown colour: Of a sharp and strong Sight, so that even to his Grave he never used Spectacles.

When

When he had moſt commendably, and with great fruit to his fellows, led a Religious life in the Mount of St. *Agnes* for the ſpace of 71 years (counting the Five years which he ſpent there before he was Cloathed) he was Summoned by his Lord and Saviour to the Mount of Eternity, which he had ſo oft before beheld at diſtance ſo oft breathed after, and his bleſſed Soul freed from her earthly priſon, did flee into the Eternal Tabernacles, there to enjoy her God for ever. He died the 92 year of his Age, the 8. of *Auguſt*, 1471.

THE

THE FIRST BOOK.

CHAP. I.

Of the Imitation of Christ, and contempt of all worldly Vanities.

HE *that followeth me, walketh not in darkneſs*, ſaith the Lord. Theſe are the words of Chriſt, by which we are admoniſhed, that we ought to imitate his Life and Manners, if we will be truely enlightned, and be delivered from all blindneſs of Heart. Let therefore our chiefeſt endeavour be to meditate upon the Life of Jeſus Chriſt.

2. The Doctrine of Chriſt exceedeth all the Doctrines of holy Men; and he that hath the Spirit, will find therein an hid-

den Manna. But it falleth out, that many, who often hear the Gospel of Christ, and yet are but little affected, because they are void of the Spirit of Christ. But whosoever will fully and feelingly understand the words of Christ, must endeavour to conform his Life wholly to *the Life of* Christ.

3. What will it avail thee to dispute profoundly of the Trinity, if thou be void of Humility, and art thereby displeasing to the Trinity? High words surely make a man neither Holy nor Just, but a vertuous Life maketh him dear to God. I had rather feel Compunction, than understand the definition thereof. If thou didst know the whole Bible, and the Sayings of all the Philosophers by heart, what would all that profit thee, without the Love of God, and without Grace? Vanity of Vanities, and all is Vanity, but to love God, and to serve him onely. This is the higheſt Wisdom, by contempt of the World, to tend towards the Kingdom of Heaven.

4. It is therefore vanity to seek after perishing Riches, and to trust in them. It is also vanity to hunt after Honours, and to climb to high Degree. It is vanity to follow the desires of the Flesh, and to labour for that, for which thou mayest afterwards suffer more grievous punishment. Vanity it is to wish to live long, and to be careleſs to live well. It is vanity to mind onely this present Life, and not to foresee those things which are to come. It is vanity

nity to set thy Love on that which speedily passeth away, and not to hasten thither, where everlasting Joy is permanent.

5. Call often to mind that Proverb, *That the Eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the Ear filled with hearing.* Endeavour therefore to withdraw thy Heart from the love of visible things, and to turn thy self to the invisible: For they that follow their Sensuality, do stain their own Consciences, and lose the favour of God.

CHAP. II.

Of the humble conceit of ourselves.

ALl men naturally desire to know: but what availeth Knowledge without the fear of God? Surely, an humble Husbandman that serves God, is better than a proud Philosopher that neglecting himself, labours to understand the course of the Heavens. Whoso knows himself well, groweth more mean in his own conceit, and delighteth not in the Praises of men. If I understood all things in the World, and were not in charity, what would that help me in the sight of God, who will judge me according to my Deeds?

2. Cease from an inordinate desire of

knowing, for therein is much diſtraction and deceit. The Learned are willing to ſeem ſo to others, and to be accounted wiſe. There are many things, which to know, doth little or nothing profit the Soul: and he is very unwiſe, that is intent upon other things, than thoſe that may avail him for the welfare of his Soul: many words do not ſatisfie the Soul; but a good Life comforteth the mind, and a pure Conſcience, giveth great aſſurance in the ſight of God.

3. How much the more thou knoweſt, and how much the better thou underſtandeſt, ſo much the more grievouſly ſhalt thou therefore be judged, unleſs thy Life be alſo more holy. Be not therefore extolled in thine own mind for any Art or Science which thou knoweſt, but rather let the knowledge given thee, make thee more humble and cautious. If thou thinkeſt that thou underſtandeſt and knoweſt much; know alſo that there are many things more which thou knoweſt not. Affect not to be overwiſe, but rather acknowledge thine own ignorance. Why wilt thou prefer thy ſelf before others, ſith there be many more learned and skilful in the Scripture than thou? If thou wilt know or learn any thing profitably, deſire to be unknown, and to be little eſteemed of by man.

4. The higheſt and moſt profitable reading, is the true knowledge and conſideration of ourſelves. It is great wiſdom and perfection to eſteem nothing of our-

ourſelves, and to think always well and highly of others. If thou ſhould ſee another openly ſin, or commit ſome hainous offence, yet oughteſt thou not to eſteem the better of thy ſelf: for thou knoweſt not how long thou ſhalt be able to remain in good eſtate. We are all frail, but thou oughteſt to eſteem none more frail than thy ſelf.

CHAP. III.

Of the Doctrine of Truth.

HAppy is he whom Truth by it ſelf doth teach, not by figures and words that paſs away, but as it is in its ſelf. Our ovvn opinion and our ovvn ſence do often deceive us, and it diſcerns little. What availeth it to cavil and diſpute about dark and hidden things; whereas for being ignorant of them, we ſhall not be ſo much as reproved at the day of Judgment? It is a great folly to neglect the things that are profitable and neceſſary, and give our minds to that which is curious and hurtful: We have Eyes and ſee not.

2. And what have we to do with *Genus* and *Species*, the dry notions of Logicians? He to whom the Eternal Word ſpeaketh, is delivered from a world of unneceſſary Conceptions. From that one Word are all things, and all ſpeak that one: and this is the Beginning, which alſo ſpeaketh un-

to us. No man without that *Word* understandeth or judgeth rightly. He to whom all things are one, he who reduces all things to one, and seeth all things in one, may enjoy a quiet mind, and remain peaceable in God. O God! who art the Truth, make me one with thee in everlasting Charity. It is tedious to me often to read and hear many things: in thee is all that I would have and can desire. Let all Doctors hold their peace; let all Creatures be silent in thy sight: Speak thou alone unto me.

3. How much the more one is united within himself, and becometh inwardly simple and pure, so much the more and higher things doth he understand without labour; for that he receiveth intelectual Light from above. A pure, sincere, and stable Spirit is not distracted, though it be employed in many Works; for that, it works all to the Honour of God, and inwardly being still and quiet, seeks not it self in any thing it doth. Who hinders and troubles thee more than the unmortified Affections of thine own Heart? A good and godly man first of all disposeth within himself those things which he is outwardly to act: neither do they draw him to the desires of an inordinate Inclination, but he ordereth them according to the prescript of right Reason. Who hath a greater combat, than he that laboureth to overcome himself? This ought to be our endeavour, to conquer ourselves, and daily to wax stronger, and to make a further growth in Holiness.

4. All

4. All Perfection in this life hath ſome Imperfection mixt with it; and no Knowledge of ours is without ſome darkneſs. An humble knowledge of thy ſelf is a ſurer way to God, than a deep ſearch after Learning: yet Learning is not to be blamed; nor the more knowledge of any thing whatſoever, to be diſliked, it being good in itſelf, and ordained by God, but a good Conſcience and vertuous Life, is always to be preferred before it. But becauſe many endeavour rather to get Knowledge, than to live well; therefore they are often deceived, and reap either none, or very ſlender profit of their labours.

5. Oh! if men beſtowed as much labour in the rooting out of Vices, and planting of Vertues, as they do in moving of Queſtions! neither would there ſo much hurt be done, nor ſo great ſcandal be given in the World; nor ſo much looſneſs be practiſed in Religious Houſes. Truly, at the day of Judgment we ſhall not be examined what we have read, but what we have done: not how well we have ſpoken, but how religiouſly we have lived. Tell me now, where are all thoſe Doctors and Maſters, with whom thou waſt well acquainted, whilſt they lived and flouriſhed in Learning? Now others poſſeſs their Livings, and perhaps do ſcarce ever think of them. In their life-time they ſeemed ſomething, but now they are not ſpoken of.

6. Oh! how quickly doth the Glory of the World paſs away! O that their Life had

been answerable to their Learning! then had their study and reading been to good purpose. How many perish in this World by reason of vain-learning, who take little care of the serving of God? And because they rather choose to be great than humble, therefore they become vain in their imaginations. He is truly great, that is great in Charity. He is truly great, that is little in himself, and that maketh no account of any height of Honour. He is truly wise, that accounteth all earthly things as dung, that he may gain Christ. And he is truly learned, that doth the will of God, and forsaketh his own will.

CHAP. IV.

Of Wisdom and Providence in our Actions.

WE must not give ear to ever saying or suggestion, but ought warily and leisurely to ponder things according to the Will of God. But (alas) such is our weakness, that we rather often believe, and speak evil of others than good. Those that are perfect men, do not easily give credit to every thing one tells them; for they know that humane frailty is prone to evil, and very subject to fail in words.

2. It is great wisdom not to be rash in thy

thy proceedings', nor to ſtand ſtiffly in thine own conceits; as alſo not to believe every thing which thou hearest, not preſently to relate again to others, what thou haſt heard or doſt believe. Conſult with him that is wiſe and conſcientious, and ſeek to be inſtructed by a better than thy ſelf, rather than to follow thine own inventions. A good Life maketh a man wiſe according to God, and giveth him experince in many things. How much the humbler one is in himſelf, and more ſubject and reſigned unto God; ſo much the more prudent ſhall he be in all his Affairs, and enjoy great peace and quiet of heart.

CHAP. V.

Of the Reading of Holy Scriptures.

TRuth, not Eloquence, is to be ſought for in holy Scripture. Each part of the Scripture is to be read with the ſame Spirit wherewith it was written. We ſhould rather ſearch after our ſpiritual Profit in the Scriptures, than ſubtilty of Speech. We ought to read plain and devout Books, as willingly as high and profound. Let not the Authority of the Writer offend thee, whether he be of great or ſmall Learning; but let the Love of pure Truth draw thee to read. Search

not who ſpake this or that, but mark what is ſpoken.

2. Men paſs away; but the Truth of the Lord remaineth for ever. God ſpeaks unto us ſundry ways, without reſpect of perſons. Our own Curioſity often hinders us in reading the Scriptures, whenas we will examine and diſcuſs that which we ſhould rather paſs over without more ado. If thou deſire to reap profit, read humbly, plainly, and faithfully: never deſire the eſtimation of Learning: Inquire willingly, and hear with ſilence the words of holy Men: diſlike not the Parables of the Elders, for they are not recounted without cauſe.

CHAP. VI.

Of inordinate Affections.

WHenſoever a man deſireth any thing inordinately, he is preſently diſquieted in himſelf. The proud and covetous can never reſt: The poor and humble in Spirit, live together in all peace. The man that is not yet perfectly dead to himſelf, is quickly tempted and overcome in ſmall and trifling things. The weak in Spirit, and he that is yet in a manner carnal and prone to ſenſible things, can hardly withdraw himſelf altogether from earthly deſires. And therefore he is often afflicted,

flicted, and when he goeth about to withdraw himself from them; and easily falls into indignation, when any opposition is made against him.

2. And if he hath followed therein his appetite, he is presently disquieted with remorse of Conscience; for that he yielded to his passion, which profiteth him nothing to the obtaining of the peace he sought for. True quietness of heart therefore is gotten by resisting our passions, not by obeying them. There is no peace in the heart of a carnal man, nor of him that is addicted to outward things, but in the spiritual and fervent man.

CHAP. VII.

Of flying vain Hope and Pride.

HE is vain that putteth his trust in Man or Creatures. Be not ashamed to serve others for the Love of Jesus Christ; nor to be esteemed poor in this world. Presume not upon thy self, but place thy hope in God. Do what lieth in thy power, and God will assist thy good Affection. Trust not in thine own knowledge, nor in the subtilty of any living Creature; but rather in the Grace of God, who helpeth the humble, and humbleth those that are self-presuming.

2. Glory not in Wealth, if thou have it, nor

nor in Friends because potent; but in God who giveth all things, and above all desireth to give thee himself. Extol not thy self for the bigness or beauty of thy Body, which is dissolved and disfigured with a little sickness. Take not pleasure in thy natural Gifts or Wit, lest thereby thou displease God, to whom appertaineth all the good whatsoever thou hast by nature.

3. Esteem not thy self better than others, lest perhaps in the sight of God, who knoweth what is in man, thou be accounted worse than they. Be not proud of well-doing; for the Judgment of God is far different from the Judgment of Men, and that often offendeth him which pleaseth them. If there be any good in thee, believe that there is much more in others. that so thou mayst conserve humility with thee. It is no prejudice unto thee to debase thy self under all men: but it is very prejudicial to thee to prefer thy self before any one man. The humble enjoy continual peace; but in the heart of the proud is envy and frequent indignation.

CHAP. VIII.

That too much familiarity is to be shunned.

LAy not thy heart open to every one; but treat of thy Affairs with the Wise and such as fear God. Converse not much.

much with young people and ſtrangers. Flatter not the rich; neither do thou appear willingly before great perſonages. Keep company with the humble and plain ones, with the devout and vertuous; and confer with them of thoſe things that may edifie. Be not familiar with any Woman; but in general commend all good Women to God. Deſire to be familiar with God alone and his Angels, and fly the Knowledge of Men.

2. We muſt have charity towards all, but familiarity with all is not expedient. Sometimes it falleth out, that a perſon unknown to us, is much eſteemed of, from the good report given him by others, whoſe preſence notwithſtanding is not grateful to the eyes of the beholders. We think ſometimes to pleaſe others by our company, and we rather diſtaſte them with thoſe bad qualities which they diſcover in us.

CHAP. IX.

Of Obedience and Subjection.

IT is a great matter to live in obedience; to be under a Superiour, and not to be at our own diſpoſing. It is much ſafer to Obey, than to Govern. Many live under obedience, rather for neceſſity than charity; ſuch are diſcontented, and do eaſily repine and murmur. Neither can they

they attain to freedom of mind, unless they willingly and heartily put themselves under obedience for the love of God. Go whither thou wilt, thou shalt find no rest, but in humble subjection under the government of a Superiour. The imagination and change of places have deceived many.

2. True it is, that every one willingly doth that which agreeth with his own sence and liking; and is apt to affect those most that are of his own mind: But if God be amongst us, we must sometimes for peace sake, cease to adhere to our own Opinion. Who is so wise that he can fully know all things? Trust not therefore to thine own Opinion; but be willing to hear the judgment of others. If that which thou thinkest be not amiss, and yet thou submittest it for God, and followest the Opinion of another, it shall be better for thee.

3. I have often heard, that it is safer to hear and take Counsel, than to give it. It may also fall out, that each ones Opinion may be good; but to refuse to yield to others, when as reason or cause requireth it, is a sign of pride and stiffness.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Of the avoiding superfluity in Words.

FLy the tumultuousnes of the World as much as thou canst: for the talk of worldly Affairs hinders very much, although they be recounted with sincere intention; for we are quickly defiled, and enthralled with Vanity. I could wish that I had oftentimes held my peace, when I have spoken; and that I had not been in company. Why do we so willingly speak and talk one with another, when notwithstanding we seldom return to silence without hurt of Conscience? The cause why we so willingly talk is, for that by discoursing one with another, we seek to receive comfort one of another, and desire to ease our mind, overwearied with sundry thoughts: and we very willingly talk and think of those things which we most love and desire; or of those which we feel most contrary and troublesome unto us.

2. But alas, oftentimes in vain, and to no end; for this outward comfort is the cause of no small loss of inward and Divine Consolation. Therefore we must watch and pray, left our time pass away idlely. If it be lawful and expedient for thee to speak, speak those things that may edifie. An evil custom and neglect of our

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own good, doth give too much liberty to inconsiderate speech: Yet religious discourses of spiritual things, do greatly further our spiritual growth, especially where persons of one mind and spirit be gathered together in God.

CHAP. XI.

Of the obtaining of Peace, and zealous desire of profit in Grace.

WE might enjoy much peace, if we would not busie ourselves with the words and deeds of other men, which appertain nothing to our charge. How can he live long in peace, that trusteth himself in the cares of others, that seeks occasion abroad, that little or seldom recollecteth himself within in his own breast? Blessed are the single-hearted, for they shall enjoy much peace.

2. What is the reason, why some of the Saints were so perfect and contemplative? Because they labouted to mortifie themselves wholly to all earthly desires: and therefore they could with their whole heart give themselves to God, and be free for holy retirement. We are too much led by our own Passions, and too sollicitous for transitory things. We also seldom overcome any one Vice perfectly, and are not inflamed with a fervent desire to grow better.

better every day; and therefore we remain cold and scarce warm in Religion.

3. If we were perfectly dead unto ourselves, and not intangled within our own breasts; then should we taste Divine things, and have some acquaintance with heavenly Enjoyments. The greatest and indeed the whole impediment is, for that we are not disentangled from our Passions and Lusts; neither do we endeavour to enter into that path of perfection, which the Saints have walked before us: and when any small adversity befalleth us, we are too quickly dejected, and turn ourselves to humane Comforts.

4. If we would endeavour like Men of Courage to stand in the Battel; surely we should feel the favourable assistance of God from Heaven. For he who giveth us occasion to fight, to the end we may get the Victory, is ready to succour those that fight manfully, and do trust in his Grace. If we esteem our progress in religious Life to consist onely in some exteriour Observances, our Devotion will quickly be at an end. But let us lay the Axe to the root, that being freed from passions, we may find rest to our Souls.

5. If every year we would root out one Vice, we should sooner become perfect men. But now oftentimes we perceive it goes contrary, and that we were better and purer at the beginning of our Conversion, than after many years of our Profession. Our fervour and profiting should increase daily; but now it is accounted a great

great matter, if one can retain but some part of his first zeal. If we would but a little force ourselves at the beginning, then should we be able to perform all things afterwards with ease and delight.

6. It is a hard matter to leave that to which we are accustomed, but harder to go against our own Wills. But if thou dost not overcome little and easie things, how wilt thou overcome harder things? Resist thy inclination in the very beginning, and unlearn evil customs, lest perhaps by little and little, they draw thee to greater difficulty. Oh, if thou didst but consider how much inward peace unto thy self, and joy unto others, thou shouldst procure by demeaning thy self well, I suppose thou wouldest be more careful of thy spiritual profiting.

CHAP. XII.

Of the profit of Adversity.

IT is good that we have sometimes some troubles and crosses; for they often make a man enter into himself, and consider that he is here in banishment, and ought not to place his trust in any worldly thing. It is good that we be sometimes contradicted; and that there be an evil, or a lessening conceit had of us; and this although we do and intend well. These things

things help often to the obtaining of Humility, and defend us from Vain-glory: for then we chiefly seek God for our inward witness, when outwardly we be contemned by men, and when there is no credit given unto us.

2. And therefore a man should settle himself so fully in God, that he need not to seek many comforts of Men. When a good man is afflicted, tempted, or troubled with evil thoughts; then he understandeth better the great need he hath of God, without whom he perceiveth he can do nothing that is good. Then also he sorroweth, lamenteth, and prayeth, by reason of the miseries he suffereth. Then he is weary of living longer, and wisheth that death would come, that he might be dissolved and be with Christ. Then also he well perceiveth, that perfect security and full peace, cannot be had in this world.

CHAP. XIII.

Of resisting Temptations.

SO long as we live in this world, we cannot be without tribulation and temptation; for as it is written in *Job*, *The life of man is a warfare upon earth.* Every one therefore ought to be careful about his temptations, and to watch in Prayer, lest the Devil find an advantage to deceive him;

him; who never sleepeth, but goeth about seeking whom he may devour. No man is so perfect and holy, but hath sometimes temptations: and we cannot be altogether without them.

2. Temptations are often profitable to men, though they are troublesome and grievous; for in them man is humbled, purged, and instructed. All the Saints have passed and profited through many tribulations and temptations; and they that could not bear temptations, became reprobate and fell away. There is no order so holy, nor place so secret, where there are not temptations or adversities.

3. There is no man that is altogether free from temptations whileſt he liveth on Earth: for in ourselves is the root thereof, being born with inclination to evil. When one temptation or tribulation goeth away, another cometh, and we shall ever have something to suffer, because we are fallen from the state of our felicity. Many seek to fly temptations, and do fall more grievously into them. By flight alone we cannot overcome, but by patience and true humility, we become stronger than all our enemies.

4. He that only avoideth them outwardly, and doth not pluck them up by the roots, shall profit little; yea, temptations will the sooner return unto him, and he shall feel himself in a worse case than before. By little and little, and by patience with long animity (through Gods help) thou shalt more easily overcome, than with vio-

violence and thine own importunity. Often take counsel in temptations: and deal not roughly with him that is tempted; but give him comfort as thou wouldst wish to be done to thy self.

5. The beginning of all evil temptations, is inconstancy of mind, and little confidence in God. For as a Ship without a Stern, is tossed to and fro with the Waves: so the man that is negligent, and leaveth his purpose, is many ways tempted. Fire trieth Iron, and Temptation a just Man. We knovv not oftentimes what we are able to do, but temptations do shew us what we are. We must be watchful, especially in the beginning of the temptation; for the enemy is then more easily overcome, if he be not suffered to enter the door of our hearts, but be resisted without the gate at his first knock. Wherefore one said, *Obsta principiis*, &c. Withstand the beginnings, for an after-remedy comes often too late. First there cometh to the mind a bare cogitation of evil, then a strong imagination thereof, aftervvard delight and an evil motion, and then consent; and so by little and little, our wicked enemy getteth entrance, whilst he is not resisted in the beginning. And how much the longer one is negligent in resisting, he becomes daily so much the weaker in himself, and the enemy stronger against him.

6. Some suffer greatest temptations in the beginning of their Conversion; others in the latter end; others again are much troubled almost through the whole time

of

of their life. Some are but easily tempted, according to the wisdom and equity of the Divine Appointment, which weigheth the estate and deserts of men, and ordaineth all things for the welfare of his chosen ones.

7. We ought not therefore to despair when we are tempted, but so much the more fervently to pray unto God, that he will vouchsafe to help us in all tribulations; who surely, according to the words of St. *Paul*, will give with the temptation such issue, that we may be able to bear it. Let us therefore humble ourselves under the hand of God in all temptations and tribulations, for he will save and exalt the humble in spirit.

8. In temptations and afflictions, man is proved how much he hath profited; and his reward is thereby the greater, and his Graces do more eminently shine forth. Neither is it any such great thing if a man be devout and fervent, when he feeleth no affliction: but if in time of adversity he bear himself patiently, there is hope then of great proficiency in Grace. Some are kept from great temptations, and are often overcome in small ones which do daily occur; to the end that being humbled, they may never presume on themselves in great matters, who are baffled in so small things.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

Of avoiding rash Judgment.

TUrn thine eyes unto thy self, and beware thou judge not the deeds of other men In judging of others, a man laboureth in vain, often erreth, and easily sinneth; but in judging and discussing of himself, he always laboureth fruitfully. We often judge of things according as we fancy them; for private affections bereaves us easily of true judgment. If God were always the pure intention of our desire, we should not be so much troubled, through the repugnance of our carnal mind.

2. But oftentimes something lurketh within, or else occurreth from without; which dravveth us after it. Many secretly seek themselves in their actions, and know it not. They seem also to live in good peace of mind, when things are done according to their will and opinion; but if things succeed otherwise than they desire, they are streightways troubled and much afflicted. The diversities of Judgments and Opinions, cause oftentimes dissentions betvveen religious and devout persons, betvveen Friends and Country-men.

3. An old custom is hardly broken, and no man is willing to be led further than himself can see. If thou dost more rely upon

on thine ovvn reaſon or induſtry, than upon that povver which brings thee under the obedience of Jeſus Chriſt, it will be long before thou become illuminated: for God will have us perfectly ſubject unto him; and that being inflamed with his love, we tranſcend the narrow limits of humane reaſon.

CHAP. XV.

Of Works done of Charity.

FOr no worldly thing, nor for the love of any man, is any evil to be done: but yet for the profit of one that ſtandeth in need, a good Work is ſometimes to be intermitted without any ſcruple, or changed alſo for a better. For by doing this, a good Work is not loſt, but changed into a better. The exteriour Work without Charity, profiteth nothing; but whatſoever is done of charity, be it never ſo little and contemptible in the ſight of the World, it becomes wholly fruitful. For God weigheth more with how much love one worketh, than how much he doeth. He doth much, that loveth much.

2. He doeth much, that doeth a thing vvell: he doeth vvell, that rather ſerveth the community, than his ovvn proper vvill. Oftentimes it ſeemeth to be Charity, and it is rather Carnality; becauſe natural inclina-

clination, self-will, hope of reward, and desire of our interest, will seldom be away.

3. He that hath true and perfect charity, seeketh himself in nothing; but only desireth in all things that the glory of God should be exalted. He also envieth none; because he affecteth no private good: neither will he rejoyce in himself; but wisheth above all things to be made happy in the enjoyment of God. He attributeth nothing that is good to any man; but wholly referreth it unto God, from whom as from the Fountain, all things proceed; in whom finally all the Saints do rest in their highest fruition. Oh, he that had but one spark of true charity, would certainly discern that all earthly things are full of vanity.

CHAP. XVI.

Of bearing with the defects of others.

THose things that a man cannot amend in himself or in others, he ought to suffer patiently, until God order things otherwise. Think that perhaps it is better so for thy trial and patience, without which, all good deeds are not much to be esteemed. Thou oughtest to pray notwithstanding when thou hast such impediments, that God would vouchsafe

to help thee, and that thou mayst bear them patiently.

2. If one that is once or twice warned will not give over, contend not with him; but commit all to God, that his will may be fulfilled, and his Name honoured in all his servants, who well knoweth how to turn evil into good. Endeavour to be patient in bearing with the defects and infirmities of others, of what sort soever they be; for that thy self also hast many things which must be suffered by others. If thou canst not make thy self such an one as thou wouldst, how canst thou expect to have another in all things to thy liking? We would willingly have others perfect, and yet we amend not our own faults.

3. We will have others severely corrected, and will not be corrected ourselves. The large liberty of others displeaseth us; and yet we will not have our desires denied us. We will have others kept under by strict Laws; but in no sort will ourselves be restrained. And thus it appeareth, how seldom we weigh our Neighbour in the same ballance with ourselves. If all men were perfect, what should we have to suffer of our Neighbour for God?

4. But now God hath thus ordered it, that we may learn to bear one anothers burden; for no man is without fault, no man but hath his burden, no man sufficient of himself, no man wise enough of himself; but we ought to bear with one another, comfort one another, help, instruct, and admonish one another. Occasions

casions of adversity, best discover how great vertue or strength each one hath; for occasions make not a man frail, but do shew what he is.

CHAP. XVII.

Of a retired Life.

THou must learn to break thy own Will in many things, if thou wilt have peace and concord with others. It is no small matter to dwell in a religious Community, and to converse therein without complaint, and to persevere therein faithfully until death. Blessed is he that hath lived well, and ended happily. If thou persevere in Grace as thou oughtest, and profit in Virtue, esteem thy self as a banished man, and a pilgrim upon Earth. Thou must be contented for Christs sake to be esteemed as a fool in this World, if thou desire to lead an holy Life.

2. The wearing of a religious habit, and shaving of the crown, do little profit; but change of manners, and perfect mortification of passions, make a true religious man. He that seeketh any thing else but God, and the salvation of his Soul, shall find nothing but tribulation and sorrow. Neither can he remain long in peace, that labouteth not to be the least, and subject to all.

3. Thou camest to serve, not to rule. Know that thou wast called to suffer and to labour, not to be idle or to spend thy time in talk. Here therefore men are proved as Gold in the furnace: Here no man can stand, unless he humble himself with his whole heart for the love of God.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of the Examples of the holy Fathers.

CONsider the lively Examples of the holy Fathers, in whom true Perfection and Religion shined; and thou shalt see how little it is, and almost nothing, which we do now in these days. Alas, what is our life if it be compared to them! The Saints and Friends of Christ served the Lord in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness, in labour and weariness, in watchings and fastings, in prayer and holy meditations, in persecutions and many reproaches.

2. O how many and grievous tribulations suffered the Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, Virgins, and all the rest that endeavoured to follow the steps of Christ! They hated their lives in this World, that they might the better possess their Souls in everlasting life. O how strict and self-renouncing a life, led those holy Fathers in the Wilderness! How long and grievous

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tentations suffered they! How often were they assaulted by the enemy! What frequent and fervent prayers offered they to God! How rigorous abstinence did they daily use! How great zeal and care had they of their spiritual proficiency! How strong a combat had they for the overcoming of their lusts! How pure and right intentions kept they unto God! In the day they laboured, and in the night they attended to continual prayer; although when they laboured also, they ceased not from mental prayer.

3. They spent all their time with profit: every hour seemed short for the service of God: and by reason of the great sweetness they felt in contemplation, they forgot the necessity of corporal refreshments. They renounced all riches, dignities, honours, friends and kinsfolk; they desired to have nothing which appertained to the World; they scarce took things necessary for the sustenance of life; they grieved to serve their bodies even in necessity. They were poor in earthly things, but very rich in Grace and Vertues. Outwardly they wanted, but invvardly were refreshed with Grace and divine Consolation.

4. They were strangers to the World, but near and familiar friends to God. They seemed to themselves as nothing, and despicable to this present World; but they were precious and beloved in the eyes of God. They were grounded in true humility, lived in simple obedience, walked

in love and patience; and therefore they profited daily in spirit, and obtained great grace in Gods sight. They were given for an example to all religious men; and they should more provoke us to endeavour after spiritual proficiencies, than the number of the lukewarm livers should prevail to make us remiss.

5. O how great was the fervour of all religious persons in the beginning of their holy institution! How great was their devotion to prayer! What ambition to excel others in vertue! How exact discipline then flourished! How great reverence and obedience under the rule of their Superiours, observed they in all things! Their footsteps yet remaining, do testifie that they were indeed holy and perfect men, who fighting so valiantly, trod the World under their feet. Now he is greatly accounted of, that transgresseth not, and that can with patience endure that which he hath undertaken.

4. O the coldness and negligence of our times! that we so quickly decline from our first fervour, and are come to that pass, that very sloth and coldness of spirit makes our own life tedious unto us. Would to God the desire to profit in Vertue did not wholly sleep in thee, who hast often seen the many examples of devout and religious persons.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

Of the exercise of a good and religious Person.

THe Life of a good and religious person, ought to be adorned with all Virtues; that he may invvardly be such as outvvardly he seemeth to men. And with reason thou oughtest to be much more within, than is perceived without: For God beholds us, whom we ought most highly to reverence whereseoever we are, and walk in purity like Angels in his sight. Daily should vve renevv our purposes, and stir up ourselves to fervour, as though this were the first day of our Conversion; and to say, Help me my God in this my good purpose, and in thy holy service; and grant that I may now this day begin perfectly; for that which I have done hitherto is nothing.

2. Aecording to our purpose shall be the success of our spiritual profiting; and much diligence is necessary to him that will profit much. And if he that firmly purposeth often faileth, what shall he do that seldom purposeth any thing, for with little resolvedness: It may fall out sundry ways that we leave off our purpose; and the light omission of spiritual Exercises, seldom passes without some loss to our Souls. The pur-

pose of just men depends upon God's Grace, and not upon their own Wisdom; upon whom they always rely for whatsoever they take in hand. For man doth purpose, but God doth dispose; neither is the way of man in himself.

3. If an accustomed exercise be sometimes omitted, either for some act of piety, or profit to my Brother; it may easily afterwards be recovered again. But if out of a slothful mind, or out of carelessness we lightly forsake the same, it is a great offence against God, and will be found to be prejudicial to ourselves. Let us do the best we can, we shall easily fail in many things; yet must we always propose some certain course, and especially against those Vices which do most of all molest us. We must diligently search into, and set in order both the outward and the inward man, because both of them are expedient to our coming forward in godliness.

4. If thou canst not continually recollect thy self, yet do it sometimes, at the least once a day, to wit, at morning, or at night. In the morning fix thy good purpose, and at night examine thy self what thou hast done, how thou hast behaved thy self in thought, word, and deed; for in these perhaps thou hast often offended both God and thy Neighbour. Gird thy loins like a man against the vile assaults of the Devil; bridle thy riotous appetite, and thou shalt be the better able to keep under all the unruly motions of the flesh. Be thou at no time idle altogether, but either reading,

reading, or writing, or praying, or meditating, or endeavouring something for the publick good As for bodily exercises, they must be used with great discretion, neither are they to be practised of all men alike.

5. The exercises that are not common, are not to be exposed to publick view; for things private are practised more safely at home. Nevertheless thou must beware thou neglect not that which is common, and be more ready for what is private. But having fully and faithfully accomplished all thou art bound and enjoyned to do, if thou hast any spare time, betake thee to thy self, as thy Devotion shall require. All cannot use one kind of exercise, but one is more convenient for this person, another for that; according to the seasonableness of times also, divers exercises are fitting. Some sute better with us on working days, others on holy days: some we have need of in the time of temptation, and of others in time of peace and quietness. Some we mind when we are pensive, and othersome when we rejoyce in the Lord.

6. When chief Festivals draw near, good Exercises are to be renewed, and the Prayers of holy men more fervently to be employed. From Feast to Feast we should make some good purpose, as though we were then to depart out of this World, and come to the everlasting Feast in Heaven. Therefore ought we carefully to prepare ourselves at holy times, and to live more devoutly, and to keep more exactly all

things that vve are to obſerve, as though vve vvere ſhortly at Gods hands to receive the revvard of our Labours.

7. But if it be deferred, let us think vvith ourſelves, that vve are not ſufficiently prepared, and unvvorthy yet of ſo great glory, vvhich ſhall be revealed in us in due time; and let us endeavour to prepare ourſelves better for our departure. *Bleſſed is that ſervant* (ſaith St. *Luke* the Evangeliſt) *whom when his Lord cometh, he ſhall find watching: Verily I ſay to you, he ſhall make him ruler over all his goods.*

CHAP. XX.

Of the love of Solitude and Silence.

SEek a convenient time to retire into thy ſelf, and meditate often upon Gods benefits. Meddle not vvith curioſities; but read ſuch things vvhich may rather yield compunction to thy heart, than buſie thy head. If thou vvilt vvithdravv thy ſelf from ſpeaking vainly and from gadding idlely, as alſo from harkening after novelties and rumours, thou ſhalt find leiſure ſufficient enough to meditate on good things. The greateſt Saints avoided the ſociety of men vvhen they could conveniently, and did rather chooſe to ſerve God, and to live to God, in ſecret.

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2. One said, As oft as I have been among men, I returned home less a man than I was before: and this we find true, when we talk long together. It is easier not to speak a word at all, than not to speak more words than we should: It is easier for a man to keep home than to keep himself well when he is abroad. He therefore that intends to attain to the more inward and more spiritual things of Religion, must with Jesus depart from the multitude and press of people. No man safely doth go abroad, but he which gladly can abide at home: no man speaks securely, but he that holds his peace willingly. No man ruleth safely, but he that is ruled willingly; no man securely doth command, but he that hath learned readily to obey.

3. No man rejoyceth securely, unless he hath within him the testimony of a good Conscience; and yet the security of the Saints, was always full of the fear of God. Neither were they less careful and humble in themselves, for that they shined outwardly with Grace and great Virtues. But the security of the wicked riseth out of pride and presumption, and in the end it deceiveth them. Although thou seem to be a good religious man, or a devout Hermit, yet promise not thy self security in this life.

4. Oftentimes those have fallen into greatest danger by overmuch self-confidence, who have been in greatest esteem and account amongst men. Wherefore it is more profitable to many not to be altogether

gether free from temptations, but to be often assaulted, lest they should be too secure, and so perhaps be puffed up with pride; or too freely give themselves to vvorldly Comforts. O hovv good a Conscience should he keep, that vvould never seek after transitory Joy, nor entangle himself vvith the things of this vvorld? O hovv great peace and quietness should he possess, that vvould cut off all vain sollicitude, and think onely upon divine things, and such as are profitable for his Soul, and vvould place all his confidence in God!

5. No man is vvorthy of heavenly comfort, unless he have diligently exercised himself in holy compunction. If thou desirest true contrition of heart, enter into thy Closet, and shut out the tumults of the World, as it is vvritten, In your Chambers be ye grieved. In thy Closet thou shalt find vvhat abroad thou shalt often lose; the more thou visitest thy Closet, the more thou vvilt like it; the less thou comest thereunto, the more thou vvilt loath it. If in the beginning of thy amendment thou art content to remain in it, and keep it vvell, it vvill afterwards be to thee a dear friend, and a most pleasant comfort.

6. In silence and in stilness, a religious Soul advantageth herself, and learneth the mysteries of holy Scripture. There she findeth rivers of tears, vvherein she may every night vvash and cleanse herself; that she may be so much the more familiar vvith her Creator, by hovv much the further off she liveth from all vvorldly disquiet,

quiet. Whoſo therefore vvithdravveth himſelf from his acquaintance and friends, God vvith his holy Angels vvill draw near unto him. It is better for a man to live privately and to have regard to himſelf, than to neglect his Soul, though he could vvork vvonders in the vvorld. It is very commendable in a religious perſon, ſeldom to go abroad, and to be unvvilling to ſee others.

7. Why art thou deſirous to ſee that, which is unlawful for thee to enjoy? for the vvorld paſſeth avvay and the luſts thereof. Our ſenſual deſires draw us to rove abroad: but vvhen the time is paſt, vvhat carrieſt thou home vvith thee, but a burdened Conſcience and a diſtracted Heart? A merry going out, bringeth commonly a mournful return home; and a joyful evening makes many times a ſad morning. So all carnal joy enters gently, but in the end it bites and ſtings to death. What canſt thou ſee elſevvhere, vvhich thou canſt not ſee here? behold the Heaven and the Earth, and all the Elements; for of theſe are all things created.

8. What canſt thou ſee any vvhere that can long continue under the Sun? Thou thinkeſt perchance to ſatiate thy ſelf, but thou canſt never attain it. Shouldſt thou ſee all things preſent before thine eyes, vvhat vvere it but a vain and unprofitable ſight? Lift up thine eyes to God in the higheſt, and pray him to pardon all thy ſins and negligencies. Leave vain things to the vain, but be thou intent upon thoſe

thing,

things which God commandeth thee. Shut thy door upon thee, and call unto thee, Jesus, thy beloved. Stay with him in thy Closet; for thou shalt not find so great peace any where else. Hadst thou not gone abroad and hearkned to idle rumours, thou mightest the better have enjoyed quietness. But sith thou delightest sometimes to hear novelties, it is fit thou suffer for it some unquietness of mind.

CHAP. XXI.

Of compunction of Heart.

IF thou wilt make any progress in godliness, keep thy self in the fear of God, and affect not too much liberty: Keep in awe all thy Senses, under the severe rod of Discipline, and give not thy self over to foolish mirth. Give thy self to compunction of heart, and thou shalt gain much Devotion thereby: compunction bringeth much good, which dissoluteness is wont quickly to destroy. It is a wonder that any man can ever perfectly rejoyce in this life, if he duly consider his banishment, and throughly weigh the many perils wherewith his Soul is invironed.

2. The levity of our minds, and the little care we have of our faults, maketh us insensible of the sorrows of our Souls; but oftentimes we vainly laugh, when we have

have just cause to weep. There is no true liberty nor right gladness, but in the fear of God accompanied with a good Conscience. Happy is he that can avoid all distracting impediments, and bring himself to the union of holy Compunction. Happy is he that can abandon all that may defile or burthen his Conscience. Resist manfully: one custom overcometh another. If thou canst let others alone in their matters, they likewise shall not hinder thee in thine.

3. Busie not thy self in matters, which appertain to others; neither do thou trouble thy self with the affairs of thy Betters. Still have an eye to thy self first, and be sure more especially to instruct thy self, before all thy loving friends. If thou hast not the favour of men, be not grieved at it; but take this to heart, that thou dost not carry thy self so warily and circumspectly, as it becometh the servant of God, and a devout religious man. It is better oftentimes and safer, that a man hath not many Consolations in this life, especially such as are agreeable to the flesh. But that we have not at all, or do very seldom taste divine Consolations, the fault is ours, because we seek not after compunction of heart, nor do altogether forsake the vain and outward comforts of this world.

4. Know that thou art unworthy of divine Consolation, and that thou hast rather deserved much tribulation. When a man hath perfect contrition, then is the whole World grievous and bitter unto him.

him. A good man findeth always sufficient cause of mourning and weeping; for whether he consider his own or his Neighbours estate, he knoweth that none liveth here without tribulation. And by how much a man looks narrowly into himself, by so much the more he sorroweth. Our sins and wickednesses, wherein we are so enwrapt, that we can seldom apply ourselves to heavenly contemplations, do minister unto us, matter of most just sorrow and inward compunction.

5. Didst thou oftner think of thy death, than of thy living long, there is no question but thou wouldst be more careful to amend. I believe thou wouldst willingly undergo any labour or sorrow in this World, and not be afraid of the greatest austerity, if thou didst consider within thy self, the infernal pains in the other World. But because these things enter not to the heart, and we still love those things only that delight us, therefore it is that we remain very dull and cold in Religion.

6. It is often our want of spirit which maketh our miserable body so easily complain. Pray therefore unto the Lord with all humility, that he will vouchsafe to give thee the spirit of Compunction, and say with the Prophet, Psal. 80. *Feed me, O Lord, with the bread of tears; and give me plenteousness of tears to drink.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

Of the consideration of humane Misery.

MIserable thou art whereſoever thou be, or whitherſoever thou turneſt, unleſs thou turn thy ſelf unto God. Why art thou troubled . when things ſucceed not as thou wouldſt or deſireſt; for who is he that hath all things according to his mind? Neither I nor thou, nor any man upon Earth; there is none in this World, be he King or Pope, without ſome tribulation or other. Who is then in the beſt caſe or condition? even he who can offer ſomething for God.

2. Many weak and infirm ones can ſay, Behold what an happy life hath ſuch an one, how wealthy, how great he is, in how great power and dignity! But lift up thine eyes to the riches of Heaven, and thou ſhalt ſee that all the goods of this life are nothing ſo to be accounted of. They are very uncertain, rather burdenſome than otherwiſe, becauſe they are never enjoyed without carefulneſs and fear. Mans happineſs conſiſteth not in having abundance of Wealth, but a mean Eſtate ſhould content him; it is truly miſery enough even to live upon the Earth. The more a man would be ſpiritul, the more bitter to him is this preſent life; becauſe he ſeeth more clear-

clearly, and perceiveth more sensibly the defects of humane corruption. For to eat and to drink, to sleep and to watch, to labour and to rest, and to be subject to other necessities of Nature, is doubtless a great misery and affliction to a religious man, that would gladly be free and delivered from all sin.

3. For the inward man is much oppressed with these outward and corporal necessities whilst we live in this World. Therefore the holy Prophet prayeth with great devotion, to be deliver'd from them, saying, *Bring me, O Lord, out of necessities.* But wo be to them that know not their own misery: and a greater wo to them that love this miserable and corruptible Life. And some there are that so much dote upon it, that although with great labour and pains, they can scarce get their necessities, yet could they live always, they would care nothing at all for the Kingdom of Heaven.

4. O how foolish are these and faithless in their hearts, who lie so deeply sunk in the Earth, that they can mind or relish nothing but carnal things! But miserable wretches as they are, they shall in the end feel to their cost, how vile and how nothing that was which they loved: Whereas the Saints of God, and all the devout friends of Christ, respected not those things which pleased the flesh, and which flourished in this life, but longed for the everlasting riches with their whole hope and desire. Their whole desire was carried upward to things

things durable and invisible, that the desire of things visible might not draw them to things below. O Brother, lose not thy hope of coming forward in godliness; there is yet time, the hour is not yet past.

5. Why wilt thou defer thy good purpose from day to day? Arise and begin in this very instant, and say, Now is the time to be doing, now is the time to be striving, now is the best time to amend thy self. When thou art ill at ease and much troubled, then is the time of deserving best; thou must pass through fire and water before thou comest to the place of refreshing. Unless thou dost earnestly force thy self, thou shalt never get the victory over sin; so long as we carry about us this frail body of ours, we can never be without trouble and sorrow. We would gladly be quiet and freed from all misery, but seeing by sin we have lost our innocency, we have together with that lost also the true felicity. Therefore it becomes us to have patience, and to wait for the mercy of God, till this our iniquity be put away, and this mortality of ours be swallowed up of life.

6. O how great is humane frailty, which is always prone to evil? to day thou confessest thy sins, and to morrow thou committest the very same thou hast confessed. Now thou art purposed to look well unto thy ways, and within a while thou so behavest thy self, as though thou hadst never any such purpose all. Good cause have we therefore to humble ourselves, and never

never to have any great conceit of ourselves, because we are so frail and so inconstant. Besides, that may quickly be lost by our own negligence, which by the grace of God, and our own great pains, we have scarce at length obtained.

7. What will become of us in the end, who begin to wax cold so timely? Woe be unto us, if we will so give ourselves unto ease, as if all were in peace and safety, when as yet there appeareth no sign of true holiness in our Conversations! We have need like young-beginners to be newly instructed again to a good life, if happily there be any hope of our future amendment and proficiency in spiritual things.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

Of the meditation of Death.

THere will very quickly be an end of thee here, therefore see what will become of thee hereafter. To day a man, to morrow none; and out of sight, out of mind. O the stupidity and hardness of mans heart, who thinketh onely upon the present, and hath no more care of what is to come! Thou shouldst so order thy self in all thy thoughts and actions, as if to day, yea this very moment, thou wert ready to depart. Hadst thou a clear Conscience, thou wouldst not greatly fear death. It were better to avoid sin, than to fly death. If thou art not prepared to day, how wilt thou be prepared to morrow? To morrow is uncertain, and how knowest thou that thou shalt live till to morrow?

2. What availeth it to live long, when we are so little the better by long living? Alas! length of days doth oftner make our sins the greater, than our lives the better. O that we had spent but one day well in this World! Many there are who count how long it is since their Conversion; and yet still slender oftentimes is the fruit of amendment of life. If to die be accounted dreadful, to live long may perhaps prove more dangerous. Happy is

is he that always hath the hour of his death before his eyes, and daily prepareth himself for to die. If at any time thou hast seen another man die, make account thou must also pass the same way.

3. When it is morning, think thou mayst die before night, and when evening comes, dare not to promise thy self the next morning. Be thou therefore always in a readiness, and so lead thy life that death may never take thee unprepared. Many dye suddenly, and when they look not for it; for the Son of Man will come when we think not of his coming. When that last hour shall come, thou wilt begin to have a far different opinion of thy whole life that is past, and be exceeding sorry thou hast been so careless and remiss.

4. O how wise and happy is he that now laboureth to be such an one in his life, as he wisheth to be found at the hour of his death! A perfect contempt of the World, a fervent desire to go forward in Vertue, the love of discipline, the painfulness of repentance, the readiness of obedience, the denying of ourselves, and the bearing any affliction for the love of Christ patiently, will give us great confidence we shall die happily. Whilst thou art in health thou mayst do much good, but when thou art sick, I see not what thou art able to do. Few by sickness grow better and more reformed; as also they who wander much abroad, seldom thereby become holy.

5. Trust

5. Trust not to friends and kindred, neither do thou put off the care of thy Souls welfare till hereafter; for men will sooner forget thee, than thou art aware of. It is better to look to it betime, and do some good beforehand, than to trust to other mens Courtesies. If thou beest not careful for thy self now, who will be careful for thee hereafter? The time that is now present is very precious, now are the days of Salvation, now is the acceptable time. But alas! that thou shouldst spend thy time so idlely here, where thou mightest purchase to live eternally hereafter. The time will come when thou shalt desire one day or hour to amend in, and I cannot say that it will be granted thee.

6. O beloved, from how great danger mightest thou deliver thy self! from how great fear free thy self, if thou wouldst be always mindful of death? Labour now to live so, that at the hour of death thou mayst rather rejoyce than fear: learn now to die to the World, that thou mayst then begin to live with Christ. Learn now to contemn all earthly things, that thou mayst freely go to Christ. Chastize thy body now by repentance, that thou mayst then have assured confidence.

7. Ah fool, why dost thou think to live long, when thou canst not promise to thy self one day? How many have been deceived and suddenly snatcht away? How often dost thou hear these reports, Such a man is slain, another man is drowned. a third breaks his neck with a fall from some

some high place; this man dieth eating, and that man playing? One perished by Fire, another by the Sword, another of the Plague, another was slain by Thieves. This Death is the end of all, and mans life suddenly passeth away like a shaddow.

8 Who shall remember thee when thou art Dead? Do, do now, my beloved, whatsoever thou art able to do; for thou knoweſt not when thou shalt die, nor yet what shall befall thee after thy death. Now whilst thou hast time, heap unto thy self everlasting riches; think on nothing but the Salvation of thy Soul; care for nothing but the things of God. Make now friends to thy self by honouring the Saints of God, and imitating their Actions, that when thou faileſt in this short life, they may receive thee into everlasting habitations.

9. Keep thy self as a stranger and pilgrim upon the Earth, and as one to whom the affairs of this World do nothing appertain. Keep thy heart free, and lifted up to God, because thou hast here no abiding City. Send thither thy daily prayers and sighs together with thy tears, that after death, thy spirit may with much happiness pass to the Lord. *Amen.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIV.

Of Judgment, and the punishment of Sins.

IN all things have a special aim to thy end, and how thou wilt be able to stand before that severe Judge to whom nothing is hid, who is not pacified with gifts, nor admitteth any excuses, but will judge cording to right and equity. O wretched and foolish sinner, who sometimes eareſt the countenance of an angry man; what answer wilt thou make to God who knoweth all thy wickedness? Why dost thou not provide for thy self against that great day of Judgment; when no man can excuse or answer for another, but every one shall have enough to answer for himself! Now are thy pains profitable, thy tears acceptable, thy groans audible, thy grief pacifieth God, and purgeth thy Soul.

2. The patient man hath a great and wholesome purgatory, who though he receive injuries, yet grieveth more for the malice of another, than for his own wrongs: who prayeth willingly for his adversaries, and from his heart forgiveth their offences, he delays not to ask forgiveness of whomsoever he hath offended; he is sooner moved to compassion than to anger; he often offereth an holy violence to himself, and

laboureth to bring the body wholly into subjection to the spirit. It is better to purge out our sins, and cut off our Vices here, than to keep them to be punished hereafter. Verily we do but deceive ourselves through an inordinate love of the flesh.

3. What is it that that infernal fire feeds upon, but thy sins! The more thou spareſt thy self now, and followeſt the flesh, so much the more hereafter shall be thy punishment, and thou storeſt up greater fewel for that flame. In what thing a man hath sinned, in the same shall he be the more grievously punished. There shall the slothful be prickt forward with burning goads, and the gluttons be tormented with grea hunger and thirst. There shall the luxurious and lovers of pleasures be bathed in burning pitch and stinking brimstone, and the envious like mad dogs shall howl for very griet.

4. There is no sin but shall have its proper torment. There the proud shall be filled with all confusion; the covetous shall be pinched with miserable penury; one hour of pain there shall be more bitter than a thousand years of the sharpeſt pennance here. There is no quiet, no comfort for the damned there; yet here we have some intermission of our labours, and enjoy the comfort of our friends. Be now sollicitous and sorrowful because of thy sins, that at the day of Judgment thou mayſt be secure with the company of blesſed Souls. For then shall the righteous with great boldneſs, stand against such as have vexed and

and oppressed them; then shall he stand to judge men, who doth now humbly submit himself to the censure of men. Then shall the poor and humble have great confidence, but the proud man shall be compassed with fearon every side.

5. Then will it appear that he was wise in this World, who had learned for Christ to be a fool and despised. Then shall every affliction patiently undergone delight us, when the mouth of iniquity shall be stopped up. Then shall the devout rejoyce, and the prophane shall mourn. Then shall he more rejoyce that hath beat down his own flesh, than he that hath abounded in all pleasure and delight. Then shall the poor attire shine gloriously, and the precious robes seem vile and contemptible. Then shall be more commended the poor Cottage, than the gilded Palace. Then will constant patience more avail us, than all earthly power. Then simple obedience shall be preferred before all worldly wisdom.

6. Then shall a good and clear Conscience more rejoyce a man than the profound learning of Philosophy. Then shall the contempt of riches weigh more than all the worldlings treasure. Then wilt thou be more comforted that thou hast prayed devoutly, than that thou hast fared daintily. Then wilt thou be more glad thou hast kept silence, than that thou hast talked much. Then will good Works avail more than many goodly Words. Then a strict life and severe repentance, will be

more pleasing than all earthly delights. Accustom thy self now to suffer a little, that thou mayst then be delivered from more grievous pains. Prove first here what thou canst endure hereafter. If now thou canst endure so little, how wilt thou then be able to endure perpetual torments? If now a little suffering make thee so impatient, what will Hell-fire do hereafter? Assure thy self thou canst not have two Paradises, it is impossible to enjoy delights in this World, and after that to reign with Christ.

7. Suppose thou hast hitherto lived always in honours and delights, what would all this avail thee, if thou wert to die at this instant? All therefore is vanity, but to love God and serve him onely. For he that loveth God with all his heart, is neither afraid of death nor punishment, nor of judgment, nor of Hell; for perfect love gives secure access to God. But he that takes delight in sin, what marvel is it if he be afraid, both of death and judgment? Yet it is good, although love be not yet of force to with-hold thee from sin, that at least the fear of Hell should restrain thee. But he that layeth aside the fear of God, can never continue long in good estate, but falleth quickly into the snares of the Devil.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXV.

Of the zealous amendment of our whole Life.

BE watchful and diligent in the service of God, and often bethink thy self wherefore thou camest hither, and why thou hast left the World. Was it not that thou mightest live to God, and become a spiritual man? Be fervent then to come forward, for shortly thou shalt receive a reward for thy Labours; there shall not be then any fear of sorrow in thy coasts. Labour but now a little, and thou shalt find great rest, yea a perpetual joy to thy Soul. If thou continuest faithfully and fervent in doing good, no doubt but God will be faithful and liberal in rewarding thee. Thou oughtest to have a good hope for getting victory; but thou must not be secure least thou wax either negligent or proud.

2. When one that was in great anxiety of mind, often wavering between fear and hope, did once, being oppressed with grief, humbly prostrate himself in a Church in prayer, and said within himself, *Oh, if I knew that I should persevere!* he presently heard within him an answer from God, which said, *What if thou didst know it, what wouldst thou do? Do now what*

thou wouldst to them, and thou shalt be secure. And being herewith comforted and strengthened, he committed himself wholly to the will of God, and that noisome anxiety ceased: neither had he any mind to search curiously any further, to know what should befal him; but rather laboured to understand what was the perfect and acceptable will of God, for the beginning and accomplishing of every good work.

3. Hope in the Lord, and do good, saith the Prophet, and inhabit the Land, and thou shalt be fed with the riches thereof. One thing there is that draweth many back from a spiritual progress, and a diligent amendment of their lives, *viz.* the horror of the difficulty, or the labour of the combat. But they above others improve most in Virtue, that endeavour most to overcome those things which are grievous and contrary unto them: For there a man improveth more and obtaineth greater grace, where he more overcometh himself and mortifieth himself in spirit.

4. But all men have not alike, to overcome and mortifie, yet he that is zealous and diligent, though he have more passions, shall profit more in Virtue, than another that is of a more temperate disposition, if he be less fervent in the pursuit of Virtue. Two things especially much further our amendment, to wit, to withdraw ourselves violently from that to which Nature is viciously inclined, and to labour earnestly for that Virtue which we most want.

want. Be careful also to avoid with great diligence those things in thy self, which do commonly displease thee in others.

5. Gather some profit to thy Soul where-soever thou be; so as if thou seest or heares of any good examples, stir up thy self to the imitation thereof. But if thou seest any thing worthy of reproof, beware thou do not the same. And if at any time thou hast done it, labour quickly to amend it. As thine eye observeth others, so art thou also noted again by others. O how sweet and pleasant a thing it is, to see the servants of Christ fervent and devout, endued with vittuous and decent manners! And on the contrary, how pitiful and grievous a thing it is, to see them that live in a dissolute and disordered sort, not applying themselves to that for which they are called! O how hurtful a thing it is, to neglect the good purposes of their vocation, and to busie themselves in that which is not committed to their care!

6. Be mindful of the profession thou hast made, and have always before the eyes of thy Soul the remembrance of thy Saviour crucified. Thou hast good cause to be ashamed looking upon the life of Jesus Christ, seeing thou hast as yet no more endeavoured to conform thy self unto him, tho' thou hast walk'd a long time in the way of God. A religious person that exerciseth himself seriously and devoutly in the most holy Life and Passion of our Lord, shall there abundantly find whatsoever is necessary and profitable for him; neither shall

ke need to seek any better thing, out of Jesus. Oh, if Jesus crucified would come into our hearts, how quickly and fully should we be instructed in all truth.

7. A fervent religious person taketh and beareth all well that is commanded him; but he that is negligent and cold, hath tribulation upon tribulation, and on all sides is afflicted; for he is void of inward Consolation, and is forbidden to seek external comforts. A religious person that liveth not according to discipline, lies open to great mischief to the ruine of his Soul. He that seeketh liberty and ease, shall ever live in disquiet; for one thing or other will displease him.

8. Oh that we had nothing else to do, but always with our mouth, and whole heart to praise our Lord God! O that thou mightest never have need to eat, nor drink, nor sleep; but mightest always praise God, and onely employ thy self in spiritual exercises; thou shouldst then be much more happy than now thou art, when for so many necessities thou art constrained to serve thy body. Would to God these necessities were not at all, but onely the spiritual refections of the Soul, which, alas, we taste of too seldom.

9. When a man cometh to that estate, that he seeketh not his comfort from any creature, then doth he begin perfectly to relish God: then shall he be contented with whatsoever doth befal him in this World. Then shall he neither rejoyce in great matters, nor be sorrowful for small; but

but entirely and confidently commit himself to God, who shall be unto him all in all, to whom nothing doth perish nor die, but all things do live unto him, and serve him at a beck without delay.

10 Remember always thy end, and how that time lost never returns. Without care and diligence thou shalt never get Virtue. If thou beginnest to wax cold, it will be evil with thee; but if thou give thy self to fervour of spirit, thou shalt find much peace, and feel less labour, through the assistance of Gods Grace and love of Virtue. The fervent and diligent man is prepared for all things. It is harder to resist Vices and Passions, than to toil in bodily labours. He that avoideth not small faults, by little and little falleth into greater. Thou wilt always rejoyce in the evening, if thou spend the day profitably. Be watchful over thy self stir up thy self, warn thy self, and whatsoever becomes of others, neglect not thy self. The more holy violence thou usest against thy self, the more shall be thy spiritual profiting. *Amen.*

THE SECOND BOOK.

CHAP. I.

Of the inward Life.

THe *Kingdom of God is within you*, ſaith the Lord. Turn thee with thy whole hearr unto the Lord, and forſake this wretched World, and thy Soul ſhall find reſt. Learn to deſpiſe exteriour things, and to give thy ſelf to the interiour, and thou ſhalt perceive the Kingdom of God to come into thee: *For the kingdom of God is peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt*, which is not given to the wicked. Chriſt will come into thee, and ſhew thee his Conſolations, if thou prepare for him a worthy Manſion within thee. All his glory and beauty is within, and there he pleaſeth him-

himself. The inward man he often visits; and hath with him sweet discourses, pleasant solace, much peace, wonderful familiarity.

2. O faithful Soul, make ready thy Heart for this Bridegroom, that he may vouchsafe to come unto thee, and dwell within thee: For he saith, *If any love me, he will keep my words, and we will come unto him, and will make our abode with him.* Give therefore admittance unto Christ, and deny entrance to all others. When thou hast Christ, thou art rich, and he will suffice thee. He will be thy faithful and provident helper in all things, so as thou shalt not need to trust in men; for men are soon changed, and quickly fail, but Christ remaineth for ever, and stands firmly unto the end.

3. There is little trust to be put in frail and mortal man, though he be profitable and dear unto thee; neither oughtest thou much to be grieved, if sometimes he cross and contradict thee. They that to day take thy part, to morrow may be against thee, and so on the contrary, they often turn like unto the wind. Put all thy trust in God, let him be thy fear, and thy love: He will answer for thee, and do in all things what is best. Thou hast not here an abiding City; and whersoever thou be, thou art a stranger and pilgrim; neither shalt thou ever have rest, unless thou be most inwardly united unto Christ.

4. Why dost thou here gaze about, since this is not the place of thy rest? In Heaven ought

ought to be thy dwelling, and all earthly things are to be lookt upon as it were by the way. All things pass away, and thou together with them. Beware thou cleave not unto them, lest thou be entangled, and so dost perish. Let thy thought be on the Highest, and thy prayer directed unto Christ without ceasing. If thou canst not contemplate high and heavenly things, rest thy self in the passion of Christ, and dwell willingly in his holy Wounds. For if thou fly devoutly unto the Wounds and precious marks of the Lord Jesus, thou shalt feel great comfort in tribulation; neither wilt thou much care for being despised of men, and wilt easily bear words of detraction.

5. Christ was also in the World despised of men, and in greatest necessity, forsaken by his acquaintance and friends in the midst of slanders. Christ would suffer and be despised; and dareſt thou complain of any? Christ had adversaries and backbiters, and wilt thou have all men thy friends and benefactors? For what shall thy patience be crowned, if no adversity happen unto thee? If thou wilt suffer no adversity, how wilt thou be the friend of Christ? Suffer with Christ and for Christ, if thou desire to reign with Christ.

6. If thou hadst but once perfectly entred into the secrets of Jesus, and tasted a little of his ardent affection; then wouldst thou not weigh thine own Commodity or Discommodity, but wouldst rather rejoyce at slanders, when they should chance

to

to be cast upon thee; for the love of Jesus maketh a man to despise himself. A lover of Jesus and of the truth, and a true inward Christian, and one free from inordinate affections, can freely turn himself unto God, and lift himself above himself in spirit, and with the greatest enjoyment of his Soul rest in God.

7. He that judgeth of all things as they are, and not as they are said and esteemed to be, is truly wise, and taught rather by God than men. He that can live inwardly, and make small reckoning of outward things, neither requireth places, nor attendeth times, for performing of religious exercises. A spritual man quickly recollecteth himself because he never poureth out himself wholly to outward things. He is not hindred by outward labour or business, which may be necessary for the time, but as things fall out, so he frameth himself unto them. He that hath well ordered and disposed all things within, careth not for the strange and perverse carriages of men. So much is a man hindred and distracted, by how much he draweth external matters unto himself.

8 If all went well with thee, and if thou were all purged, all things would fall out to thy good and advantage. But many things displease and often trouble thee, because thou art not yet perfectly dead unto thy self, nor separated from all earthly things. Nothing so defileth and intangleth the heart of man, as the impure love to creatures. If thou refuse outward com-

comfort, thou wilt be able to contemplate the things of heaven, and often receive internal joy.

CHAP. II.

Of humble Submiſſion.

RESpect not much who is with thee, or who is againſt thee: but endeavour and care that God may be with thee in every thing thou doeſt. Have a good conſcience, and God will defend thee. For whom God will help, no malice of man can hurt. If thou canſt hold thy peace and ſuffer, without doubt thou ſhalt ſee that our Lord will help thee. He knoweth the time and manner how to deliver thee, and therefore thou oughteſt to reſign thy ſelf unto him. It belongs to God to help, and to deliver from all ſhame. Oftentimes it is very profitable for the keeping us more humble, that others know and reprehend our faults.

2. When a man humbleth himſelf for his faults, then he eaſily pacifieth others, and quickly ſatisfieth thoſe that are offended with him. God protecteth and delivereth the humble; he loveth and comforteth the humble, unto the humble man he enclineth himſelf; unto the humble giveth great grace; and after his humiliation he raiſeth him unto glory. Unto the

the humble he reveaſleth his ſecrets, and ſweetly draweth and inviteth him unto himſelf. The humble perſon though he ſuffer ſhame, is yet in peace; for that he reſteth in God, and and not in world. Do not think that thou haſt profited any thing, unleſs thou eſteem thy ſelf inferiour to all.

CHAP. III.

Of a good and peaceable Man.

FIrſt, keep thy ſelf in peace, and then mayſt thou pacifie others A peaceable man doth more good than he that is well learned. A paſſionate man turneth even good into evil, and eaſily believeth the worſt. A good peaceable man turneth all things into good. He that is well in peace, is not ſuſpicious of any: but he that is diſcontented and troubled, is toſſed with divers ſuſpicions; he is neither quiet himſelf, nor ſuffereth others to be quiet: He often ſpeaketh that which he ought not to ſpeak; and omitteth that which were more expedient for him to do. He conſidereth what others are bound to do; and neglecteth that which he is bound to himſelf. Firſt therefore have a careful zeal over thy ſelf, and then thou mayſt juſtly ſhew thy ſelf zealous alſo of thy Neighbours good.

2. Thou

2. Thou knoweſt well how to excuſe thine own deeds, and thou wilt not receive the excuſes of others. It were more meet that thou didſt accuſe thy ſelf, and excuſedſt thy Brother. If thou wilt be born withal, bear alſo with another. Behold how far off thou art yet from true Charity and Humility, which knoweth not how to be angry with any, or to be moved with indignation, but onely againſt himſelf. It is no great matter to converſe with the good, and thoſe that are of a gentle diſpoſition; for that is naturally pleaſing to all, and every one willingly enjoyeth peace, and loveth thoſe beſt that agree with him. But to be able to live peaceably with unquiet and perverſe men, or with the diſorderly, or ſuch as contradict us, is a great grace, and a very commendable and manly deed.

3. Some there are that keep up themſelves in peace, and are in peace alſo with others. And there are ſome that neither are in peace themſelves, nor ſuffer others to be in peace. Some there are who are troubleſome to others, but always more troubleſome to themſelves. And others there are that keep themſelves in peace, and labour to bring others unto peace. Our whole peace in this miſerable life conſiſts rather in humble ſuffering, than in not feeling adverſities. He that can beſt tell how to ſuffer, will beſt keep himſelf in peace. He is a Conqueror of himſelf, a Lord of the World, a Friend of Chriſt, and Heir of Heaven.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of a pure Mind, and upright Intention.

With two wings man is lifted up from earthly Vanities, that is, with simplicity and purity. Simplicity ought to be in our intention; Purity in our affections. Simplicity doth intend God; Purity doth apprehend and take him. No good action will hinder thee, if thou be inwardly free from all inordinate affection. If thou intend and seek nothing else but the will of God and the good of thy Neighbour, thou shalt enjoy internal liberty. If thy heart were sincere and upright, then every creature would be unto thee a looking-glass of life, and a book of holy doctrine. There is no creature so little and abject that representeth not the Goodness of God.

2. If thou wert inwardly good and pure, then thou wouldst be well able to see and understand all things without any impediment. A pure heart penetrateth Heaven and Hell. Such as every one is inwardly, so he judgeth outwardly. If there be joy in the World, surely a man of a pure heart possesseth it. And if there be any where tribulation and affliction, an evil Conscience best feels it. As Iron put into the fire loseth its rust, and becometh all bright like fire, so he that wholly turneth himself unto

to God, is purged from all foulneſs and ſloathfulneſs, and is changed into a new man.

3. When one beginneth to wax cold, then he is afraid of a ſmall labour, and willingly receiveth external comfort: but when he once beginneth to overcome himſelf perfectly, and to walk manfully in the way of God: then he eſteemeth thoſe things to be light, which before ſeemed grievous unto him.

CHAP. V.

Of the conſideration of ones ſelf.

WE cannot truſt much to our ſelves for that grace oftentimes and underſtanding is wanting. There is but little light in us, and that which we have we quickly loſe by our negligence, and oftentimes we do not perceive our own inward blindneſs. We often do evil, and excuſe it worſe. We are ſometimes moved with paſſion, and we think it to be zeal. We reprehend ſmall things in others, and paſs over great matters in ourſelves. We quickly feel and weigh what we ſuffer at the hands of others; but we mind not what others ſuffer from us. He that doth well, and rightly conſiders his own Works, will find little cauſe to judge hardly of another.

2. The

2. The inward Christian preferreth the care of himself before all other cares. And he that diligently attendeth unto himself, doth seldom speak much of others. Thou wilt never be so inwardly religious, unless thou pass over other mens matters with silence, and look especially to thy self. If thou attend wholly unto God and thy self, thou wilt be little moved with whatsoever thou seest abroad. Where art thou, when thou art not with thy self? And when thou hast run over all, what hast thou then profited, if thou hast neglected thy self? If thou desirest peace of mind and true union, thou must put all things behind thee, and look only upon thy self.

3. Thou shalt therefore profit much, if thou keep thy self free from all temporal cares. Thou shalt greatly decrease, if thou esteem any thing of this World. Let nothing be great unto thee, nothing acceptable, but onely God himself, or that which is of God. Esteem all comfort vain which thou receivest from any creature. A Soul which loveth God, despiseth all things that are inferiour unto God. God alone is everlasting, and of infinite greatness, filling all creatures; the Souls solace, and the true joy of the Heart.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of the joy of a good Conscience.

THe glory of a good man, is the testimony of a good Conscience. Have a good Conscience, and thou shalt ever have joy. A good Conscience is able to bear very much, and is very chearful in adversities. An evil Conscience is always fearful and unquiet. Thou shalt rest sweetly, if thy Heart do not reprehend thee. Do thou never rejoyce, but when thou hast done well. Sinners have never true mirth, nor feel inward peace; because *there is no peace to the wicked*, saith the Lord. And if they should say, We are in peace, no evil shall fall upon us, and who shall dare to hurt us? Believe them not; for upon a sudden will arise the wrath of God, and their deeds shall be brought to nought, and their thoughts shall perish.

2. To glory in tribulation is no hard thing for him that loveth; for to glory so, is to glory in the Cross of our Lord. That glory is short, which is given and received from men. Sorrow always accompanieth the glory of the World. The glory of the good is in their Consciences, and not in the Tongues of men. The gladness of the just is of God, and in God: and their joy is of the truth. He that desireth true

true and everlasting glory, careth not for that which passeth away with time. And he that seeketh temporal glory, or contemneth it not from his Heart; sheweth himself but little to esteem of the glory of Heaven. He enjoyeth great tranquility and peace of mind, that careth neither for the praises nor dispraises of men.

3. He will easily be content and pacified, whose Conscience is pure. He is not the more holy, though thou commend him; nor the more abject, though thou dispraise him. What thou art, that thou art; neither canst thou be said to be greater than what thou art in the sight of God. If thou consider what thou art within thee, thou wilt not care what men say of thee. Man seeth in the face, but God looketh into the heart: Man considereth the deeds, but God weigheth the intention. To do always well, and to esteem little of himself, is a sign of an humble Soul. To refuse to be comforted by any creature, is a sign of great purity and inward confidence.

4. He that seeketh to witness for himself from without, doth shew that he hath wholly committed himself unto God: *For not he that commendeth himself, the same is approved* (said blessed *Paul*) *but whom God commendeth.* To walk inwardly with God, and not to be possessed with any outward affection, is the state of a spiritual man.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII

Of the Love of Jesus above all things.

BLeſſed is he that underſtandeth what it is to love Jeſus, and to deſpiſe himſelf for Jeſus. Thou oughteſt to love thy Beloved, for thy Beloved; for that Jeſus will be beloved alone above all things. The love of things created is deceitful and inconſtant; the love of Jeſus is faithful and conſtant. He that cleaveth unto creatures, ſhall fall with that which is ſubject to fall: He that embraceth Jeſus, ſhall ſtand firmly for ever. Love him and keep him for thy friend, who when all go away, will not forſake thee, nor ſuffer thee to periſh in the end. Thou muſt once be left of all, whether thou wilt or no.

2. Keep cloſe to Jeſus both in life and death, and commit thy ſelf unto his truſt, who, when all fail, can alone help thee. Thy beloved is of that nature, that he will not admit of a Corival; but will have thy Heart alone, and ſit like a King in his own Throne. If thou couldeſt purge thy ſelf perfectly of all Creatures, Jeſus would willingly dwell with thee. Whatſoever thou repoſeſt in men, out of Jeſus, is all no better than loſt. Truſt not nor rely upon a reed full of wind; for that all fleſh is graſs, and all the glory thereof ſhall wither away as the flower of the field.

3.

3. Thou shalt quickly be deceived, if thou look onely to the outward shew of men. And if in them thou seekest thy comfort and profit, thou shalt often feel loss. If thou seekest Jesus in all things, thou shalt truly find Jesus; but if thou seekest thy self, thou shalt also find thy self, but to thy own harm. For man doth more hurt himself if he seek not Jesus, than the whole World and all his adversaries could anoy him.

CHAP. VIII.

Of familiar Conversation with Jesus.

WHen Jesus is present, all is well, and nothing seemeth difficult; but when Jesus is absent, every thing is hard. When Jesus speaketh not inwardly unto us, our comfort is nothing worth; but if Jesus speak but one word, we feel much consolation. Did not *Mary* presently rise from the place where she wept, when *Martha* said unto her, *The Master is come, and calleth for thee?* Happy is the hour when Jesus calleth from tears to spiritual joy. How dry and hard art thou without Jesus! How foolish and vain, if thou desire any thing out of Jesus! Is not this a greater loss, than if thou shouldst lose the whole World?

2. What can the World profit thee without

out Jesus? To be without Jesus is a grievous Hell; and to be with Jesus is a sweet Paradise. If Jesus be with thee, no man can hurt thee. He that findeth Jesus, findeth a good treasure, yea a good above all goods: And he that loseth Jesus, loseth too much, and more than the whole World. He is most poor that liveth without Jesus; and he is most rich that is well with Jesus.

3. It is a piece of great skill to know how to converse with Jesus, and great wisdom to know how to keep Jesus. Be humble and peaceable, and Jesus will be with thee; be devout and quiet, and Jesus will stay with thee. Thou mayst soon drive away Jesus, and lose his grace, if thou turn aside to outward things. And if thou shouldst drive him from thee, and lose him, unto whom wilt thou flie, and what friends wilt thou then seek? Without a friend thou canst not well live; and if Jesus be not above all a friend unto thee, thou shalt be too too sorrowful and desolate. Thou dost therefore foolishly, If thou dost trust or rejoyce in any other. It is better for thee to have the whole World against thee, than Jesus offended with thee. Amongst all things therefore that are dear unto thee, let Jesus alone be thy chiefest Beloved.

4. Love all for Jesus, but Jesus for himself: Jesus Christ alone is singularly to be beloved; who alone is found to be good and faithful above all friends. For him, and in him, let as well friends as foes be dear unto thee, and all these are to be prayed for, that all may know and love

him. Never desire to be singularly commended or beloved, for that appertaineth only unto God, who hath none like unto himself. Neither do thou desire that the heart of any should be set on thee, nor do thou set thy heart on the love of any; but let Jesus be in thee, and in every good man.

5. Be pure and free within, and intangle not thy heart with any creature. Thou oughtest to be as it were naked, and to carry a pure heart to God, if thou wouldst be free to consider and see how sweet the Lord is. And truly, unless thou be prevented and drawn by his grace, thou shalt never attain to that happiness to forsake and cast off all, that thou alone mayst be united to him alone. For when the grace of God cometh unto a man, then he is made able for all things. And when it goeth away, he is poor and weak, and as it were left only unto the lash and scourge of every adversary. In this thou oughtest not to be dejected, nor despair; but to resign thyself with all indifferency unto the Will of God, and to bear all things that befal thee for the glory of Christ; for after Winter followeth Summer, after night cometh day, and after a tempest, fair weather.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Of the want of all Comfort.

IT is no hard matter to despise humane comfort, when we have divine. It is much and very much, to be able to want both humane and divine comfort; and for the glory of God, to be willing to endure desolation of heart; and to seek himself in nothing, nor to regard his own merit. What great matter is it, if thou be chearful and devout at the coming of grace? This hour is wished for of all men. He rideth easily enough whom the grace of God carrieth. And what marvel if he feel not his burden, who is born up by the Almighty, and led by the greatest Guide.

2. We are always willing to have something for our comfort: And a man doth hardly put off and forsake himself. The holy Martyr St. *Laurence*, overcame the World with his Priest, because he despised whatsoever seemed delightsome in the World; and for the love of Christ, he patiently suffered the High Priest of God St. *Sixtus* (whom he most dearly loved) to be taken from him. He overcame therefore the love of man by the love of the Creator; and he rather chose the divine Pleasure, than humane Comfort. See thou also learn to forsake some necessary thing, and a beloved Friend, for

the love of God. Be not grieved when thou art forsaken by a friend, knowing that we all at length must be separated one from another.

3. A man must fight long and mightily with himself, before he get the full victory over himself, and be able to draw his whole heart in to God. When a man trusteth in himself, he easily slideth unto humane comforts; but a true lover of Christ, and a diligent follower of Virtue, betakes not himself to humane comforts, nor seeketh such sensible sweetnesses, but rather hard exercises, and to sustain great labours for Christ.

4. When therefore spiritual comfort is given thee from God, receive it thankfully; but know that it is the gift of God, not any desert of thine. Be not puffed up, joy not too much, neither do thou presume vainly; but be rather the more humble for that gift, and more wary and solicitous in all thine Actions; for that hour will pass away, and temptation will succeed. When Consolation is taken from thee, despair not presently; but with humility and patience, wait for the heavenly Visitation; for God is able again to give thee greater Consolation. This is not new nor strange unto them that have experience in the way of God; for the great Saints and ancient Prophets, had oftentimes experience of such kind of vicissitudes.

5. For which cause one under the enjoyment of divine favour, said, *I said in my prosperity, I shall never be moved.* But

in the want of this, he addeth what he found in himself; saying, *Thou turn'dst thy face from me, and I became troubled.* Yet doth he not despair in the midst of these changes, but more earnestly prayeth unto the Lord, and saith, *Unto thee, O Lord, will I cry, and I will pray unto my God.* Lastly, he receiveth the fruit of his Prayer, and witnesseth he was heard; saying, *The Lord hath heard me, and taken pity on me: the Lord is become my helper.* But wherein? *Thou hast turned,* saith he, *my sorrow into joy, and thou hast compassed me about with gladness.* If great Saints have been so dealt withal, we that are weak and poor ought not to despair, if we be sometimes fervent and sometimes cold; for the spirit cometh and goeth, according to the good pleasure of his Will. For which cause blessed Job said, *Thou visitest him early in the morning, and suddenly thou provest him.*

6. Whereupon therefore can I hope, or wherein ought I to trust, but in the great mercy of God alone, and in the onely hope of heavenly grace? for whether I enjoy the presence of good men or religious brethren, or faithful friends, or holy Books, or excellent Treatises, or sweet Songs and Hymns, all these help little, and have little savour when grace forsaketh me, and I remain left in mine own poverty. At such time there is no better remedy than patience, and the ordering of myself according to the Will of God.

7. I never found any so religious and devout, that hath not had sometimes a with-

drawing of grace, or felt not some decrease of zeal. There was never Saint so highly rapt and illuminated, who first or last was not tempted. For he is not worthy of the high contemplation of God, who hath not been exercised with some tribulation for Gods sake. For temptation going before, is wont to be a sign of ensuing comfort. And unto those that are proved by temptations, heavenly comfort is promised. *He that shall overcome*, saith he, *I will give him to eat of the tree of Life.*

8. But divine comfort is given, that a man may be stronger to bear adversities. There followeth also temptation, lest he should wax proud of any good. The Devil sleepeth not, neither is the flesh as yet dead; therefore cease not to prepare thy self to the battel: for on the right hand and on the left, are enemies that never rest.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Of thankfulness for the Grace of God.

WHy seekest thou rest, since thou art born to labour? Dispose thy self to patience rather than to comfort, and to the bearing of the Cross, rather than to gladness. What secular person is there that would not willingly receive spiritual joy and comfort, if he could always have it? For spiritual comfort exceed all the delights of the World, and pleasures of the Flesh. All worldly delights are either vain or unclean; but spiritual delights are only pleasant and honest, sprung from Virtue, and infused by God into pure minds. But no man can always enjoy these divine comforts according to his desire; for the time of temptation is not long away.

2. False freedom of mind, and great trust of ourselves, is very contrary to heavenly visitations. God doth well in giving the grace of comfort, but man doth evil in not returning all again unto God with thanksgiving. And therefore the gifts of grace cannot flow in us, because we are not thankful to the giver, and return them not wholly to the head Fountain. For grace ever attendeth him that is thankful; and from the proud shall be taken that which is wont to be given to the humble.

3. I desire not that Consolation that taketh from me compunction; nor do I affect that Contemplation which leadeth to haughtiness of mind. For all that is high is not holy; nor all that is sweet, good; nor every desire, pure; nor every thing that is dear unto us, is grateful to God. I do willingly accept of that Grace, whereby I may ever become more humble and affected with an holy fear, and be made more ready to forsake my self. He that is taught by the gift of Grace, and school'd by the scourge of the withdrawing thereof, will not dare to attribute any good to himself, but rather acknowledge himself poor and naked. Give unto God that which is Gods, and ascribe unto thy self that which is thine own; that is, give thanks to God for his Grace, and acknowledge that nothing is to be attributed to thee, but onely sin, and the punishment due thereunto.

14. Set thy self always in the lowest place, and the highest shall be given thee; for the highest consists not without the lowest. The chiefest Saints before God are the least in their own judgments; and how much the more glorious, so much the humbler within themselves. Those that are full of truth and heavenly glory, are not desirous of vain glory. Those that are firmly setled and grounded in God, can no way be proud. And they that ascribe all unto God, what good soever they have received, seek not glory one of another, but would have that glory which is from God alone; and desire above all things to praise God in him-

himself, and in all the Saints, and always tend unto the same.

5. Be therefore thankful for the least gift, so shalt thou be meet to receive greater. Let the least be unto thee also as the greatest, and the most contemptible as an especial gift. If thou consider the worth of the Giver, no gift will seem little, or of too mean esteem. For it is not little that is given by the most High God. Yea, if he should give punishment and stripes, it ought to be grateful; for that he doth it always for our welfare, whatsoever he permitteth to happen unto us. He that desires to keep the Grace of God, let him be thankful for the Grace given, and patient for the taking away thereof. Let him pray that it may return: let him be wary and humble, lest he lose it.

CHAP. XI.

How few the lovers of the Cross of Christ are.

JESUS hath now many lovers of his heavenly Kingdom, but few bearers of his Cross. He hath many desirous of Comfort, but few of Tribulation. He findeth many Companions of his Table, but few of his Abstinence. All desire to rejoyce with him, but few will suffer any thing for him, or with him. Many fol-

low Jesus unto the breaking of Bread; but few to the drinking of the Cup of his Passion. Many reverence his Miracles, few the ignominy of his Cross. Many love Jesus as long as adversities happen not: Many praise and bless him, as long as they receive any comfort from him. But if Jesus hide himself, and leave them but a while, they fall either into complaint, or into too much dejection of mind.

2. But they that love Jesus for Jesus, and not for some comfort of their own, bless him in all tribulation and anguish of heart, as well as in the greatest comfort. And although he should never give them comfort, they notwithstanding would ever praise him, and always give him thanks.

3. O how powerful is the pure love of Jesus, which is mixed with no self-love, nor proper interest! Are not all those to be called hirelings, that ever seek comforts? Do they not shew themselves to be rather lovers of themselves than of Christ, that always think of their own Commodity and gain? Where may one be found that will serve God freely?

4. It is hard to find any one so spiritual that is stript of the love of all earthly things. For where is any one to be found that is indeed poor in spirit, and free from all affection of creatures? He is a Jewel of such price as is scarce to be met with in these parts. If a man should give all his wealth, yet is it nothing. And if he should outwardly express great repentance, yet it is little. And if he should attain to all knowledge,

ledge, he is yet afar off. And if he should be of great Virtue, and very fervent Devotion, yet there is much wanting; to wit, one thing, which is most necessary for him. What is that? That leaving all, he forsake himself, and go wholly from himself, and retain nothing of self-love: And when he hath done all that he knoweth to be done, let him think that he hath done nothing.

5. Let him not weigh that much which might be much esteemed; but according to truth let him affirm himself to be an unprofitable servant, as our Saviour hath said, *When you shall have done all things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants.* Then may he be truly poor and naked in spirit, and say with the Prophet, I am alone and poor; yet no man more richer, no man more powerful, no man more free than he that can leave himself and all things, and set himself in the lowest place.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Of the high-way of the holy Cross.

UNto many this speech seemeth hard, *Deny thy self, take up thy Cross and follow Jesus.* But it will be much harder to hear that last word, *Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire.* For they that now willingly hear and follow the Word of the Cross, shall not then fear to hear the Sentence of everlasting Damnation. This sign of the Cross shall be in Heaven; when our Lord shall come to judgment. Then all the servants of the Cross, who in their life-time conformed themselves unto Christ crucified, shall draw near unto Christ the Judge with great confidence.

2. Why therefore feareſt thou to take up the Cross; which leadeth thee to a Kingdom? In the Cross is salvation, in the Cross is life, in the Cross is protection against our enemies, in the Cross is infusion of heavenly sweetness, in the Cross is strength of mind, in the Cross is joy of spirit, in the Cross is the heighth of Virtue, in the Cross is the perfection of sanctity. There is no salvation of the Soul, nor hope of everlasting life but in the Cross. Take up therefore thy Cross and follow Jesus, and thou shalt go into life everlasting. He is gone before, bearing his Cross and is dead

dead for thee on the Croſs; that thou mayſt alſo bear thy Croſs, and deſire to die on the Croſs with him. For if thou dieſt with him, thou ſhalt alſo live with him: And if thou be his companion in pain, thou ſhalt be partaker with him alſo in glory.

3. Behold in the Croſs all doth conſiſt, and all lyeth in our dying upon it: for there is no other way unto life, and unto true inward peace, but the way of the holy Croſs, and of daily mortification. Go where thou wilt, ſeek what ſoever thou wilt, thou ſhalt not find a higher way above, nor a ſafer way below, than the way of the holy Croſs. Diſpoſe and order all things according to thy will and judgment, yet thou ſhalt ever find, that of neceſſity, thou muſt ſuffer ſomewhat either willingly or againſt thy will, and ſo thou ſhalt ever find the Croſs. For either thou ſhalt feel pain in thy body, or in thy Soul thou ſhalt ſuffer tribulation of ſpirit.

4. Sometimes thou ſhalt be forſaken of God, ſometimes thou ſhalt be troubled by thy Neighbours; and which is more, oftentimes thou ſhalt be irkſome to thy ſelf: neither canſt thou be delivered or eaſed by any remedy or comfort; but ſo long as God pleaſeth thou oughteſt to bear it; for God will have thee learn to ſuffer tribulation without comfort; and that thou ſubject thy ſelf wholly to him, and become more humble by tribulation. No man hath ſo cordial a feeling of the Paſſion of Chriſt, as he who hath ſuffered the like

him.

himself. The Cross therefore is always ready, and attends thee everywhere. Thou canst not escape it whithersoever thou flyest: For whersoever thou goest, thou carriest thy self with thee, and shalt ever find thy self both above and below, without and within, which way soever thou dost turn thee, thou shalt find the Cross; and every where thou must of necessity have patience, if thou wilt have inward peace, and enjoy an everlasting Crown.

5. If thou bear the Cross willingly, it will bear thee, and lead thee to thy desired end; to wit, where there shall be an end of suffering, though here there shall not. If thou bear it unwillingly, thou makest for thy self a new burden, and increasest thy load, and yet notwithstanding thou must bear it. If thou cast away one Cross, without doubt thou shalt find another, and that perhaps a more heavy one.

6. Canst thou think to escape that, which no man could ever yet avoid? Which of the Saints was without Crosses in this World, and Tribulation? Verily, Jesus Christ our Lord was never one hour without pain of suffering, so long as he lived. Christ (saith he) must suffer, and rise again from death, and so enter into his glory; and how dost thou seek any other way, than this high-way, which is the way of the holy Cross?

7. The whole life of Christ was a Cross and Martyrdom: And dost thou seek rest and joy? Thou art deceived, thou art deceived if thou seekest any other thing than

than to suffer tribulation; for this whole mortal life is full of miseries, and environed on every side with crosses. And how much the more one hath profited in spirit, so much the heavier crosses he oftentimes finds; for the love he bears to God, increases the grief which he endures for his banishment.

8. But yet this man, though so many ways afflicted, is not without the remedy of spiritual consolation, for the great good which he perceives to grow unto him by bearing the image of his Cross. For whilst he willingly puts himself under it, all the burden of tribulation is turn'd into the confidence of divine comfort. And how much the more the Flesh is wasted by affliction, so much the more is the Spirit strengthened by inward grace: And sometimes he is comforted with the desire of tribulation and adversity, for the love of conforming himself to the Cross of Christ, that he would not wish at any time to be without sorrow and tribulation; because he believes, that so much the more grateful he shall be unto God, by how much the more he can suffer for him. This is not a Work of humane Vertue, but it is the Grace of Christ, that can and doth so much in frail flesh: that which naturally it always abhors and flies, that by fervour of spirit it takes hold on and loves.

9. It is not according to mans inclination to bear the Cross, to chastize and subdue the Body, to fly Honours, to suffer contumelies

tumelies vvith a vvilling heart, to despise himself, and to vvish to be despised, to bear all adversities and damages, and to desire no prosperity in this World. If thou considerest thy self, thou shalt be able to perform no such matter of thy self: But if thou trustest in the Lord, strength shall be given thee from Heaven, and the World and Flesh shall be made subject to thy command. Neither shalt thou fear thy enemy the Devil, if thou be armed vvith faith, and beareſt the Cross of Christ.

10. Set therefore thy self like a good and faithful servant of Christ, to bear manfully the Cross of thy Lord, who vvas crucified for thee out of love. Prepare thy self to bear many adversities and divers kinds of troubles in this miserable life; for so it vvill be vvith thee vvhereſoever thou be, and so surely thou vvilt find it, vvhereſoever thou hide thy self. So it must be, and there is no remedy or means to avoid tribulation and sorrovv, but to bear them. Drink of the Cup of our Lord heartily, if thou vvilt be his friend, and desireſt to have part vvith him. As for comforts, leave them to God; let him do therein as shall beſt please him. Set thou thy self to suffer tribulations, and account them the greateſt comforts; for that the sufferings of this life are not vvorthy of the glory vvhich is to come, although thou alone couldſt suffer them all.

11. When thou shalt come to this estate, that tribulation shall seem svveet and savoury unto thee for Christ; then thou mayſt

mayst think it is vvell vvith thee, for thou hast found a Paradise upon Earth. As long as it is grievous to thee to suffer, and that thou desirest to fly it, so long shalt thou be ill at ease; and the tribulation thou flyest, will followv thee every vvhere.

12. If thou dost set thy self to that thou oughtest, to vvir, to suffer and to die to thy self, it vvill quickly be better vvith thee, and thou shalt find peace. Although thou houldst have been rapt even unto the third Heaven vvith *Paul*, thou art not for this secured that thou shalt suffer no adversity: *I* (saith Jesus) *will shew him how great things he must suffer for my Name.* It remaineth therefore that thou suffer, if thou vvilt love Jesus, and perpetually serve him.

13. O that thou vvert vvorthy to suffer something for the Name of Jesus! hovv great glory vvould it be unto thee! vvhat joy to all the Saints of God! hovv great edification also to thy Neighbour! For all do commend patience, though fevv desire to suffer. With great reason thou oughtest to be vvilling to suffer a little for Christ, since many suffer far greater things for the World.

14. Knovv for certain that thou oughtest to lead a dying life. And hovv much the more every one dyeth to himself, so much the more doth he begin to live to God. No man is fit to attain unto heavenly things, unless he submit himself to the bearing of adversities for Christ. Nothing is more wholesom to thee in this World, than to

suffer

suffer willingly for Christ. And if it were in thy choice, thou shouldst rather wish to suffer adversities for Christ, than to enjoy the delight of many comforts: Because by these means thou shouldst be more like unto Christ, and more conformable to all the Saints. For our merit and the perfection of our estate, doth not consist in much sweetness and comforts, but rather in suffering great afflictions and tribulations.

15. If there had been any better thing and more profitable for the health of man than suffering, surely Christ would have shewed it by word and example. But he plainly exhorted all the Disciples that followed him, and all that desire to follow him, to the bearing of the Cross, and saith, *If any come after me, let him take up his Cross and follow me.* So as when we have read and searched all, let this be the last conclusion, That we must enter into the Kingdom of God through many tribulations.

THE

THE THIRD BOOK.

CHAP. I.

Of the inward speech of Christ unto a faithful Soul.

I Will hear what our Lord will speak in me. Blessed is the Soul that heareth our Lord speak in her, and receiveth from his mouth the Word of Comfort. Blessed are those Ears that receive the sound of the divine Voice, and listen not to the whisperings of the World. Blessed indeed are those Ears, which hearken not to the Voice, which soundeth outwardly, but unto Truth, which teacheth inwardly. Blessed are the Eyes, that being shut up to outward things, are attentive to those things that are internal. Blessed are they that enter into

the invvard things, and endeavour to prepare themselves more and more by daily exercises to the attaining of heavenly secrets. Blessed are they that delight to converse vvith God, and rid themselves of all vvorldly impediments.

2. Consider these things, my Soul, and shut up the door of thy sensual desires, that thou mayst hear vvhat thy Lord God speaketh in thee. Thus saith thy Beloved, I am thy safety, thy peace, and thy life; keep thy self vvith me, and thou shalt find peace: Leave all transitory things, and seek those that be everlasting What are all temporal things, but deceiving snares; and vvhat do all creatures avail thee, if thou be forsaken by the Creator: Forsake therefore all earthly things, and labour to please thy Creator, and be faithful unto him, that thou mayst attain unto the true happiness.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

That Truth speaketh inwardly without noise of Words.

Christian. Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth: I am thy servant, grant me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies. Incline my heart to the words of thy mouth. Let thy speech distil as the dew upon my Soul. The children of *Israel* in times past said unto *Moses*, *Speak unto us, and we will hear thee: Let not the Lord speak unto us, lest we die.* Not so, Lord, not so, I beseech thee. But rather with the Prophet *Samuel*, I humbly and earnestly entreat, *Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth.* Let not *Moses* speak unto me, nor any of the Prophets, but do thou rather speak, my Lord God, the inspirer and enlightner of all the Prophets; for thou alone without them canst perfectly instruct me, but they without thee can profit nothing.

2. They indeed may send forth Words, but they cannot give Spirit and Life: they speak marvellous well, but if thou be silent, they inflame not the heart. They may teach the letter, but thou openest the sense. They bring forth mysteries, but thou unlockest the meaning of sealed things. They declare thy Commandments, but

but thou helpest to fulfil them. They shew the way, but thou givest strength to walk in it. They work only exteriourly, but thou instructest and enlightenest the heart. They water outwardly, but thou givest fruitfulness. They sound forth words, but thou givest Understanding to the hearing.

3. Let not therefore *Moses* speak unto me, but thou my Lord God, the Everlasting Truth, lest perhaps I should die, and become without fruit, if I be warmed only outwardly, and not inflamed within; lest the Word heard and not fulfilled, known and not loved, believed and not observed, should increase my judgment. Speak therefore, Lord, for thy Servant hears: Thou hast the Words of everlasting Life. Speak to the comfort of my Soul, and to thy Praise, Glory, and everlasting Honour.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

That the Words of God are to be heard with humility, and that many weigh them not.

SOn, hear my words, words of great comfort, excelling all the knowledge of Philosophers, and Wise Men of this World. My words are spirit and life, not to be weighed by the Understanding of Man. They are not to be drawn to vain and great affection. And I said, Blessed is the man whom thou shalt instruct, O Lord, and shalt teach thy Law, that thou mayst give him quietness from evil days, and that he be not abandoned upon Earth.

2. I have taught (saith our Lord) the Prophets from the beginning, and cease not continually to speak to every one; but many are deaf, and give no ear to my speech. The greater number do more willingly listen to the World, than to God; and sooner follow the desires of their own Flesh than the Will of God. The World promises temporal and small things, and is served with great diligence: I promise most high and eternal Things, and the Hearts of Men are not moved there-

with;

with. Who is he that serveth and obeyeth me with equal care to that with which the World and the Lords thereof are served! *Blush, O Sidon, saith the Sea.* And if thou ask the cause, hear wherefore: For a little Prebend, a long journey is undertaken; for everlasting Life, many will scarce once lift a foot from the ground. A thing of small value is sought after greedily: for a penny sometimes there is foul contention; for a vain thing and a sleight promise, men cease not to toil day and night.

3. But alas for an unchangeable good, for an inestimable reward, for the highest honour and glory without end, they are loth to take the least pains. Blush therefore, slothful and complaining Servant, that they are found to be more ready to destruction, than thou to life. They rejoyce more in Vanity, than thou in the truth. And yet they are sometimes frustrated of their hope: but my promise deceiveth none, nor sendeth him away empty that trusteth in me. I will give that which I have promised, I will fulfil that which I have said; but to him that remains faithful in my love to the end. I am the Rewarder of all that are good, and do try my devout Servants with strong trials.

4. Write my Words in thy Heart, and think diligently of them; for they will be very necessary in time of temptation. What thou understandest not when thou readest, thou shalt know in the day of visitation. I am wont to visit my elect two several ways, to wit, With Temptation and Comfort. And

And I daily read two Lessons unto them, one reprehending their Vices, another exhorting them to the increase of Virtues. He that hath my Words and despises them, hath within himself that which shall judge him at the last day.

A Prayer to implore the grace of Devotion.

5. O Lord my God, thou art all that I can desire. Who am I that dare speak unto thee? I am thy poorest Servant, and a most vile Worm; much more poor and contemptible, than I can or dare express. Remember, Lord, that I am nothing, have nothing, and can do nothing. Thou alone art just, good, and holy; thou canst do all things; thou performest all things, and replenishest all things, leaving only a sinner void of all good. Call to mind thy Mercies, and fill my Heart with thy Grace, thou who wilt not that thy Works be without effect.

6. How can I support my self in this miserable life, unless thy Mercy and Grace comfort me? Turn not thy face from me; delay not thy visitation; draw not away thy comfort, lest my Soul become as Earth without Water to thee. Lord, teach me to fulfil thy Will; teach me to live worthily and humbly in thy sight; for thou art my Wisdom, thou dost perfectly know me, and didst know me before the World was made, and before I was born into the World.

CHAP. IV.

That we ought to live in Truth and Humility, in the sight of God.

SOn, walk in my sight in Truth; and and ever seek me in simplicity of heart. He that walks in my sight in truth, shall be defended from evil incursions, and Truth shall deliver him from Seducers, and from the detractions of the Wicked. If thou be delivered by Truth, thou shalt be truly free, and shalt not care for the vain speeches of Men. Lord, it is true according as thou sayst, so I beseech thee let it be with me, and keep me, and bring me to an happy end. Let thy Truth teach me, and let it deliver me from all evil affection and inordinate love; and I shall walk with thee in great freedom of heart.

2. I will teach thee (saith Truth) those things that are right and pleasing in my sight. Think of thy sins with great sorrow and grief, and never esteem thy self any thing for thy good Works. Thou art a sinner, and subject to many passions. Of thy self thou always tendest to nothing, and art quickly cast down and overcome; quickly troubled, quickly dissolved. Thou hast nothing wherein thou canst glory, but many things for which thou oughtest to humble and despise thy self; For thou art much

weaker, than thou art able to comprehend.

3. Let nothing therefore seem much to thee, whatsoever thou doſt. Let nothing ſeem great, nothing precious and wonderful, nothing worthy of eſtimation, nothing high, nothing truly commendable, and to be deſired, but that which is everlaſting. Let the eternal Truth above all things pleaſe thee. Let thy own great unworthineſs always diſpleaſe thee. Fear nothing; blame and flie nothing ſo much as thy Sins and Vices: Which ought to diſpleaſe thee more, than the loſs of any thing whatſoever. Some walk not ſincerely in my ſight, but led by a certain Curioſity and Pride, will know my Secrets, and underſtand the high Myſteries of God, neglecting themſelves, and their own Salvation. Theſe oftentimes (becauſe I reſiſt them) do fall into great Temptations and Sins, for their Pride and Curioſity.

4. Fear the Judgment of God, dread the Wrath of the Almighty: Diſcuſs not the Works of the Higheſt, but examine thy own Iniquities, in how much thou haſt offended, and how much good thou haſt neglected. Some carry their Devotion onely in Books, ſome in outward ſigns and figures; ſome have me in their Mouths, but little in their Hearts. There are others who being illuminated in their Underſtanding, and purged in their Affection, do always aſpire with an earneſt mind to everlaſting happineſs; and are unwilling to hear of the things of this World, and do ſerve the

neceſſities of Nature with grief; and theſe perceive what the ſpirit of Truth ſpeaks in them. Becauſe it teacheth them to deſpiſe earthly, and love heavenly things; to neglect the World, and day and night to deſire Heaven.

CHAP. V.

Of the wonderful effect of Divine Grace.

I Praiſe thee, O heavenly Father, Father of my Lord Jeſus Chriſt; for that thou haſt vouchſafed to remember me a poor and wretched Creature. O Father of Mercies, and God of all Comfort! thanks be to thee, who refreſheſt me ſometimes with thy comfort, though unworthy of all comfort. I ever bleſs and glorifie thee, with thy Holy Ghoſt for ever. O God my Lord, the holy lover of my Soul, when thou ſhalt come into my Heart, all that is within me will rejoyce. Thou art my glory, and the exultation of my Heart. Thou art my hope and my refuge in the day of my tribulation.

2. But becauſe I am yet weak in love, and imperfect in Virtue, I have need to be comforted by thee. Viſit me therefore often, and inſtruct me with thy holy Diſcipline. Deliver me from evil paſſions, and heal my Heart of all inordinate Affections; that

that being cured within, and well purged, may be made fit to love, strong to suffer, and constant to persevere.

3. Love is a great matter, and a great good; which alone maketh every thing that is heavy light, and beareth equally unequal burdens. For it carrieth a burden without a burden, and maketh every thing that is bitter, sweet and delightsome. The noble love of Jesus giveth man force to work great things, and stirreth him up to desire always the most perfect. Love will be above, and not kept down with any base thing. Love will be free from all worldly affection, to the end his inward sight may not be obscured, that he may not be intangled with the desire of any transitory gain, or troubled with the want thereof. Nothing is sweeter than love, nothing stronger, nothing higher, nothing more ample, nothing more pleasant, nothing fuller nor better in Heaven or Earth: Because love hath its beginning from God, and cannot rest but in God above all Creatures.

4. He that loveth, flyeth, runneth, and rejoyceth: He is free and not held in. He giveth all for all, and hath all in all, because he resteth in one highest above all, from whom all good floweth and proceedeth. He respecteth not the gifts, but turneth himself above all goods to the Giver. Love oftentimes knoweth no measure, but inflameth above all measure. Love feeleth no burden, weigheth no pains, desireth above its strength, complaineth not of impossibility, because it thinks all things

lawful and possible. It is therefore able to undertake all things, and performeth and bringeth many things to effect: Whereas he that doth not love, fainteth and can do nothing.

5. Love always watcheth, and sleeping sleepeth not: being wearied, is not tired; straightned, is not pressed; frighted, is not troubled: But like a lively flame and burning torch, breaketh upwards, and passeth through all with great security. If any one loveth, he knows what this voice crieth. The burning love of the Soul is a loud cry in the ears of God, which saith, My God, my Love, thou art wholly mine, and I wholly thine.

6. Enlarge me in love, that my Heart may taste how sweet it is to love, and to be dissolved, and swim in thy love. Let me be possessed by love, mounting above my self, with excessive fervour and admiration. Let me follow thee on high, my Beloved, let my Soul faint in thy Praises, rejoycing with love. Let me love thee more than my self, and not my self but for thee, and all in thee that truly love thee, as the Law of Love commands, which shines in thee.

7. Love is swift, sincere, pious, sweet, and delightful; strong, patient, faithful, prudent, suffering, full of courage, and never seeking itself. For where one seeks himself, there he falls from love. Love is circumspect, humble, and upright; not remiss, not mutable, nor attending to vain things: sober, chaste, constant, quiet, and guar-

guarded in all the Senses. Love is subject and obedient to Superiours, mean and abject to itself, devout and thankful to God, trusting and hoping always in him, even then when God imparts no sweetness unto it: For no man lives in love without sorrow.

8. He that is not ready to suffer all things and stand to the Will of his Beloved, is not worthy to be called a lover. A lover ought to suffer all that is hard and distastful for his Beloved; and not to turn away from him, for any contrary accidents.

CHAP. VI.

Of the proof of a true Lover.

SOn, thou art not yet a strong and prudent Lover. Wherefore, Lord? Because thou givest over for a small adversity, and too earnestly seekest comfort. A constant Lover standeth firmly in temptations, and giveth not credit to the crafty perswasions of the enemy. As I please him in prosperity, so I am not unpleasant to him in adversity.

2. A prudent lover considereth not so much the gift of his lover, as the love of the giver. He rather esteemeth the good Will, than the Value, and placeth all gifts under his Beloved. A noble lover resteth not in the gift, but in me above any gift.

All therefore is not lost if sometimes thou hast less taste of me and my Saints, than thou wouldest. That good and sweet desire which thou sometimes feelest, is the effect of present Grace, and a certain taste of the heavenly Country: Whereon thou must not rely too much, for it goeth and cometh. But to fight against evil motions of the mind, which may happen unto thee, and to despise the suggestion of the Devil, is a sign of Virtue and great merit.

3. Let not therefore strange fancies forced into thee, of any matter whatsoever, trouble thee. Retain a firm purpose, an upright intention to God. Neither is it an illusion that sometimes thou art suddenly rapt on high, and presently returnest again unto the accustomed Vanities of thy heart. For thou dost rather unwillingly suffer them, than commit them: And as long as they displease thee, and thou strivest against them, it is a merit, and no loss.

4. Know that thy ancient enemy doth ever strive to hinder thy desire to good; and to divert thee from all devout exercise: To wit, from the Worshipping of Saints, from the devout memory of my Passion, from the profitable remembrance of thy Sins, from the guard of thy own Heart, and from the firm purpose of profiting in Virtue. He thrusteth many evil thoughts into thy mind, that he may cause a weariſomness, and horrour in thee, to draw thee from devout Prayer and reading. Humble confession is displeasing unto him, and if he could,

could, he would cause thee to cease from receiving the Sacrament of my Body. Trust him not, nor care for him, although he should often set snares of deceit to intrap thee. Charge him with it, when he suggesteth evil and unclean thoughts unto thee. Say unto him, Avant, filthy Spirit, blush miserable Wretch; thou art filthy that bringest such things unto my ears. Away from me, wicked Deceiver, thou shalt have no part in me: But Jesus shall be with me as a strong Warriour, and thou shalt remain confounded. I had rather die, and undergo any torment, than to consent unto thee. Hold thy peace and be silent; I will hear thee no more, tho' thou shouldst work me many troubles. My Lord is my light and salvation, whom shall I fear? If whole Armies should stand together against me, my heart shall not fear. Our Lord is my Helper and my Redeemer.

5. Fight like a good Souldier: And if thou sometimes fall through frailty, recover greater forces than before, trusting in my more aboundant Grace: And take great heed of vain pleasing of thy self, and pride. This brings many into errour, and makes them sometimes fall into almost incurable blindness. Let the fall of the proud foolishly presuming of themselves, serve thee for a warning, and a perpetual humiliation.

CHAP. VII

That Grace is to be hid under the vail of Humility.

SOn, it is more profitable and safe for thee to hide the grace of Devotion, not to extol thy self, not to speak much, nor to esteem much thereof: But rather to despise thy self, and fear it, as given to one unworthy thereof. This affection is not to be cleaved unto, which may be quickly changed into the contrary. Think when thou art in grace, how miserable and needy thou art wont to be without it. Neither doth therein onely consist the profit of spiritual Life, when thou hast the grace of comfort; but when thou humbly, resignedly, and patiently sufferest the withdrawing thereof: So that thou be not then less diligent in the exercise of Prayer, nor suffer thy self to pass over the rest of thy accustom'd goodworks; but that thou willingly perform what lyeth in thee, according as thou art able and understandest to be fit: Not neglecting thy self wholly for the dryness and trouble of mind, which thou feelest.

2. There are many that when it succeedeth not well with them, presently they become impatient or slothful. The way of man is not always in his power, but it belongeth to God, to give, and to comfort when

when he will, how much he will, and whom he will, as it shall please him and no more. Some unadvised persons have overthrown themselves for the greedy desire which they had of the grace of Devotion: Attempting more than they were able to perform, not weighing the measure of their weakness, but following rather the desire of their Heart, than the judgment of Reason. And because they presumed on greater matters than was pleasing to God, they quickly lost his grace. They were made needy, and left in a dejected estate, that built themselves nests in Heaven: To the end that being humbled, and impoverished, they may learn not to fly with their own Wings, but to live in hope under my Feathers. They that are yet new and unacquainted in the way of our Lord, unless they govern themselves by the Counsel of discreet persons; may easily be deceived and overthrown.

3. And if they will rather follow their own judgment, than give credit to others that are experienced, their end will be dangerous, if they cannot be drawn from their own conceit. Seldom those that are wise in their own opinion, suffer themselves humbly to be governed by others. A little knowledge with humility, and a slender understanding, is better than great treasures of Learning with a vain self-liking. It is better for thee to have less, than much of that whereof thou mayst be proud. He doth not discreetly that wholly giveth himself over to mirth, forgetting his former poverty, and the chaste fear of God, which

fear-

feareth to lose the grace which he hath obtained. Neither is he vertuously wise, that in time of adversity or any tribulation whatsoever, yieldeth to despairing thoughts, and thinketh and imagineth of me less confidently than he ought.

4. He that will be over secure in time of Peace, shall be often found in time of War too dejected and fearful. If thou couldst always contiue humble and lowly within thy self, and temper and govern thy Soul well, thou shouldst not so soon fall into danger and offence. It is good counsel, that when thou conceivest fervour of spirit, thou shouldst think what will become of thee, when that light shall leave thee. And when that doth happen, remember the light may return again, which for thy instruction and my glory, I have withdrawn for a time.

5. Such proof is often more profitable, than if thou shouldst always enjoy prosperity according to thy desire. For Merits are not to be weighed in a man by the number of Visions and Comforts which he hath, or by his knowledge in Scriptures, or by his being placed in high degree, but in that he is grounded in true Humility, and repleniſhed with divine Charity: If he always purely and entirely seek the honour of God, if he esteem himself nothing, and with sincere heart despise himself, and rejoyce more to be despised and humbled by others, than to be honoured.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Of a mean conceit of ourselves in the sight of God.

SHall I speak unto my Lord, since I am dust and ashes? If I esteem better of my self, behold thou standest against me, and my iniquities bear true witness: Neither can I speak against it. But if I abase and esteem nothing of my self, and cast off all self-conceit, and (as I am) account my self to be dust, thy grace will be favourable unto me, and thy light will be near unto my heart: and all estimation how little soever shall be swallowed up in the depth of my nothing, and perish evetlastingly. There thou sheweſt my self unto me, what I am, what I have been, and whither I am come: For alas I am nothing, and I knew it not. And if I be left to my self, behold I become nothing, and a mass of infirmity. But if thou suddenly look upon me, I am presently made strong and filled with new joy. And it is much, that I am so suddenly lifted up, and so graciously embraced by thee, that of my own weight always sink downward.

2. Thy love is cause of this, freely preventing me, and relieving me in so many necessities, preserving me also from grievous dangers, and (as I may truely say) deliver-

livering me from innumerable evils. For surely by evil loving my self, I lost my self: & by seeking thee alone, and sincerely loving thee, I have found both my self and thee; and for thy love have more deeply brought my self to nothing. For that thou, O most sweet Jesu, dealest with me above all desert, and above all that I dare hope and request.

3. Blessed be thou my God, for although I be unworthy of all good, yet the nobleness of thy bounty and thy infinite Goodness, never ceaseth to do good even to the ungrateful, and to them that be turned away far from thee. Turn us unto thee, O Lord, that we may be grateful, humble, and devout: For thou art our safety, our power, and our strength.

CHAP. IX.

That all things are to be referred unto God, as unto the last end.

SOn, I ought to be thy chiefest and last end, if thou desirest to be truly blessed. With this intention thy affection shall be purified, which is oftentimes inclined inordinately to itself, and unto Creatures. For if in any thing thou seek thy self, thou presently faintest, and drie'st up within thy self. Direct therefore all things chiefly unto me, for I am he that hath

hath given all. Consider every thing as flowing from the highest good; and therefore all things are to be reduced unto me as unto their first beginning.

2. Out of me, as out of living fountains, the little and the great, the poor and the rich, do draw the Water of Life: And they that willingly and freely serve me, shall receive grace for grace. But he that will glory out of me, or be delighted in any particular good, shall not be grounded in true joy, nor enlarged in his heart, but shall be many ways hindred and straitned. Thou oughtest therefore to ascribe no good unto thy self, nor attribute the praise of Virtue unto any man: But give all unto God, without whom man hath nothing. I have bestowed all, and will that all be returned to me again: And with great severity I require thanks.

3. This is the truth that putteth to flight vain glory. And if heavenly Grace and true Charity enter in, there shall be no envy nor grudging of heart, neither shall there be any place for self-love. For divine Charity overcometh all, and enlargeth all the forces of the Soul. If thou understand aright, in me alone thou wilt rejoyce, in me alone thou wilt hope: For none is good but God alone, who is to be praised above all things, and to be blessed in all.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

That despising the World, it is sweet to serve God.

NOw I will speak again, O Lord, and will not be silent. I will say in the ears of my God, My Lord, and my King that is on high: O how great is the multitude of thy sweetness, O Lord, which thou hast hidden for those that fear thee! But what art thou to them that love thee? What to them that serve thee with their whole heart? Truely unspeakable is the sweetness of thy contemplation, which thou bestowest on them that love thee. In this chiefly thou hast shewed me the sweetness of thy Charity! for that, when I was not, thou madst me; and when I went astray far off from thee, thou broughtest me back again, that I might serve thee: And hast commanded me to love thee.

2. O Fountain of everlasting Love, what shall I say of thee! How can I forget thee that hast vouchsafed to remember me, even when I withered away and perished! Thou hast used mercy with thy Servant, beyond all the expectation of my heart: And hast bestowed thy grace and friendship beyond all merit. What shall I return unto thee for this Grace? For it is not granted to every one to forsake all things, to renounce the

the World, and to undertake a life of Religion and Perfection. It is much that I serve thee, whom all Creatures are bound to serve? It ought not to seem much unto me to serve thee: But this rather seemeth much, and marvelous unto me, that thou vouchsafest to receive into thy service one so poor and unworthy, and to joyn him with thy beloved Servants.

3. Behold all is thine which I have, and whereby I serve thee: And yet thou rather serveſt me than I thee. Behold Heaven and Earth, which thou haſt created for the service of man are ready at hand, and do daily perform whatsoever thou doſt command; and this is little. Yea thou haſt also appointed the Angels to the service of Man. But that which excelleth all is, that thou thy self haſt vouchsafed to serve Man, and promiſed to give thy self unto him.

4. What shall I give thee for all theſe thousands of benefits? I would I could serve thee all the days of my life! I would I were able at leaſt for one day, to do thee some worthy and acceptable service! Thou art truly worthy of all service, of all honour and everlaſting praiſe. Thou art my Lord, and I thy poor servant, that am bound to serve thee with all my forces, neither ought I ever to ceaſe to praiſe thee. And this I wiſh to do, this I deſire: And whatsoever is wanting unto me, vouchsafe I beſeech thee to supply.

5. It is a great honour, a very great glo-

ry to serve thee, and despise all things for thee. For great grace shall be given to them, that shall willingly subject themselves unto thy most holy service. They shall receive most sweet comfort of the Holy Ghost, that for thy love shall renounce all carnal delights. They shall attain great freedom of mind, that for thy Names sake shall enter into the narrow way, and shall have left off all care of this World.

6. O sweet and delightful servitude of God, by which man is truly made free and holy! O sacred state of religious Bondage, which maketh man equal to Angels, pleasing to God, terrible to Devils, and grateful and of great esteem to all the faithful! O service to be embraced, and always wished for, by which we obtain the greatest good, and attain to that joy which never shall have end.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

That the Desires of our Heart are to be examined and moderated.

SOn, thou oughteſt to learn many things more, which thou haſt not yet well learned. What are thoſe, Lord? That thou frame thy Deſires wholly according to my pleaſure: And be not a lover of thy ſelf, but a diligent follower of my Will. Thy deſires oftentimes do ſtir thee up, and drive thee forwards with violence. But conſider whether thou art moved rather for my Honour, than for thy own profit. If I be the cauſe, thou wilt be well content with whatſoever I ſhall ordain: But if there lurk in thee any ſelf-inclination, behold this is it that hindreth thee, and weigheth thee down.

2. Beware therefore thou incline not too much unto any deſire that cometh to thy mind, before thou ask my Counſel: Leſt perhaps afterwards it repent thee, and that thou begin now to diſlike that, which before did pleaſe thee, and which thou earneſtly deſireſt as the beſt. For every affection that ſeemeth good, is not preſently to be followed: Nor every contrary affection at the firſt to be fled. It is expedient ſometimes to uſe a reſtraint even in good deſires and endeavours, leſt by importuni-

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ry thou incur distraction of mind, and by evil example become a scandal unto others: Or being gainsaid by others, thou be suddenly troubled and fall.

3. Yet sometimes thou oughtest to use violence, and resist manfully thy sensual appetites, and respect not what thy body would, or would not: But rather to labour, that even perforce it be subject to the spirit. And it is to be chastized so long, and to be forced under servitude, until it readily obey in all things, and learn to be content with a little, and to be pleased with ordinary things, and not to murmur against any inconvenience.

CHAP. XII.

Of the effect of Patience, and of strife against Concupiscence.

LOrd God, I perceive Patience is very necessary for me; because many adversities do happen in this Life. However I shall dispose of my peace, my life cannot be without War and Affliction. So it is, Son: And my Will is not, that thou seek after that peace which is void of Temptation, or that which feeleth no contrariety; but then think that thou hast found peace, when thou art exercised with sundry Tribulations, and tried in many Adversities.

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2. If thou say that thou art not able to suffer much, how then wilt thou endure the Fire of Purgatory? Of two Evils the less is always to be chosen. That thou mayest therefore avoid everlasting punishment in the next World, endeavour to suffer patiently for God the present Evils of this. Dost thou think that men of this World suffer little or nothing? Thou art deceived. Look into the Life even of them that live in greatest delicacies, and thou shalt find it otherwise. But thou wilt say, they have many delights, and follow their own wills, and therefore they make small account of their Tribulations. Be it so, that they have whatsoever they will; but how long dost thou think it will last?

3. Behold the Wealthy of this World vanish away like smoak, and there shall be no memory of their Joys past. Yea even while they live also, they rest not in them without grief, irksomeness, and fear, for the self-same thing in which they take their delight, is oftentimes the cause of sorrow unto them and much affliction. They have their desert; who for that they immodestately seek and follow delights, they do not obtain them, but with shame and sorrow.

4. O how short and deceitful, how inordinate and filthy are those pleasures! Yea, so senceless and blind are men, that they understand it not: But like dumb Beasts, for a little pleasures of a corruptible Life, they incur the eternal Death of their Soul. Do not thou therefore, my Son, follow the disordinate inclinations of

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thy corrupt Nature, but forsake thy own Will. Delight in our Lord, and he will give thee the desires of thy Heart.

5. If thou desire true delight, and to be more plentifully comforted by me; behold, in the contempt of all worldly things, and the cutting off all base delights, shall be thy Blessings, and abundant comforts shall be given thee. And how much the more thou withdraweſt thy self from all comfort of Creatures, so much the sweeter and more forcible Consolations shalt thou find in me. But at first thou canst not attain unto them, without a certain grief, labour, and strife. The old custom will make resistance, and thou must overcome it with another custom that is better. Thy flesh will murmur; but thou must bridle it with fervour of spirit. The old Serpent will sting and trouble thee: But by Prayer he shall be put to flight; and with profitable labour thou shalt shut the door against him.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Of the humble Obedience of a Subject, according to the Example of Christ.

SOn, he that endeavoureth to withdraw himself from Obedience, withdraweth himself from Grace. And he that seeketh to have things in private, shall lose the common. He that doth not willingly and freely submit himself to his Superiour, it is a sign that his Flesh is not yet perfectly obedient unto him, but oftentimes rebelleth and murmureth against him. Learn therefore readily to submit thy self to thy Superiour, if thou desirest to subdue thy own Passions. For the outward Enemy is sooner overcome, if the inward Man be in good estate. There is no worse Enemy, nor more troublesome unto the Soul, than thou unto thy self, nor agreeing well with the Spirit. Thou must of necessity have a true contempt of thy self, if thou wilt prevail against Flesh and Blood.

2. Because thou lovest thy self as yet too inordinately, therefore thou art afraid to resign thy self wholly to the Will of others. But what great matter is it, if thou that art dust, and nothing, submit thy self to a Man for God, when I the Almighty and Highest Soveraign, who created all things of nothing, humbly submitted my self unto

to Man for thee? I became the most humble and abject of all Men, that thou mightest overcome thy Pride with my Humility. Learn to obey, thou that art Dust; learn to humble thy self, thou Earth and Clay, and put thy self under the feet of all Men. Learn to break thy own Will, and to yield thy self to all subjection.

3. Take courage against thy self, and suffer not Pride to live in thee; but humble and sumbit thy self to all, that every one may go over thee, and tread thee as dirt of the streets under their feet. Vain Man, what canst thou complain of? What canst thou answer, foul Sinner, to them that reprove thee, who hast so often offended God, and so many times deserved Hell? but my Eye hath spared thee, because thy Soul was precious in my sight; that thou mightest know my Love, and always remain grateful for my Benefits: That thou mightest continually give thy self to true subjection and humility, and mightest bear patiently the contempt of thy self.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the secret Judgments of God to be considered, lest we be extolled in our good Deeds.

THou thundereſt thy Judgments over me, O Lord, ſhakeſt all my Bones with fear and trembling: My Soul is ſore afraid. I ſtand aſtoniſhed when I conſider that the Heavens are not pure in thy ſight. If thou haſt found wickedneſs in Angels, and haſt not pardoned them, what ſhall become of me? Stars fell from Heaven, and what do I preſume that am but duſt? They whoſe Works ſeem laudable, fell into the loweſt Hell: And I have ſeen them that did eat the Bread of Angels, to be delighted with the Husks of Swine.

2. There is no ſanctity, if thou, O Lord, withdraweſt thy Hand: No Wiſdom availeth, if thou ceaſeſt to Govern; no ſtrength helpeth, if thou leaveſt to Defend; no Chaſtity ſecure, if thou doſt not Protect it; no Cuſtody of our own profitable, if thy ſacred Watchfulneſs be not preſent. For if thou leaveſt us, we ſink and periſh; but if thou vouchſafeſt to viſit us, we are raiſed up and do enjoy life; we are inconſtant, but by thee we are ſtrengthened: We wax cold, but by thee we receive heat.

3. O how meanly and basely ought I to think of my self! How little, yea nothing ought I to esteem it, if I seem to have any good! O Lord, how ought I to submit my self under thy unsearchable Judgments! Where I find my self to be nothing else but nothing, and less than nothing. O unmeasurable Weight! O Sea that can never be passed over; where I find my self onely and wholly nothing! Where then is the lurking hole of Glory? Where is the confidence conceived of Vertue? All Vain-glory is swallowed up in the depth of thy Judgments, which hang over my head.

4. What is all Flesh in thy sight? Shall Clay glory against him that framed it? How can he be lifted up with vain Words, whose heart is truly subject to God? All the World cannot move him to any elation of mind, whom Truth hath subjected unto it; neither shall he be moved with the Tongues of all his Praisers, that hath setled his whole hope in God. For they also that speak, behold, are nothing: They shall pass away with the sound of their Words; but the Truth of our Lord remaineth for ever.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

What we ought to do and say, in every thing which we desire.

SOn, say thus in every thing: Lord, if it be pleasing unto thee, let this be done in this sort. Lord, if it be to thy Honour, let this be done in thy Name. Lord, if thou seest it expedient for me, and allowest it to be profitable, then grant unto me that I may use this unto thy Honour. But if thou knowest it will be hurtful unto me, and not profitable unto the health of my Soul, take from me all such desire. For every desire proceedeth not from the Holy Ghost; though it seem unto Man right and good. It is hard to judge whether a good Spirit, or the contrary drive thee to desire this or that: Or whether also by thy own Spirit thou be moved thereunto. Many are deceived in the end, who at the first seemed to be led by a good Spirit.

2. Always therefore whatsoever occurreth unto thy mind to be desired, let it be desired with the fear of God, and with humility of Heart: And above all thou oughtest to commit it unto me with full resignation of thy self: And thou oughtest to say, Lord, thou knowest what is best, do this, or that, as thou pleasest. Give what thou wilt, and how much thou wilt, and when thou wilt. Do with me as thou knowest, and as best pleaseth thee,

and is most for thy Honour. Set me where thou wilt, and deal with me in all things according to thy Will. I am in thy hand; turn me, and turn me again, which way soever thou please. Behold I am thy Servant ready to obey thee in all things: For I desire not to live unto my self, but unto thee: And would to God it might be in some worthy and perfect manner.

A Prayer for the fulfilling of the Will of God.

3. Grant me thy Grace, sweet Jesus, that it may be with me, and labour with me, and persevere with me until the end. Grant me always to desire and will that which is most acceptable unto thee, and best pleaseth thee. Let thy Will be mine, and let my Will ever follow thine, and agree perfectly with it. Let my Will and Nill be all one with thine; and not to be able to will, or refuse any thing else, but what thou will, or rejectest.

4. Grant that I may die to all things that are in the World, and to love for thy sake to be contemned, and not to be known in this World. Grant that above all things that can be desired, I may rest in thee, and make my Heart to enjoy peace in thee. Thou art the true peace of the Heart, thou art the onely Rest; out of thee all things are troublesome and unquiet. In peace, in the self-same; that is, in thee, one chiefest eternal Good, I will sleep and rest. *Amen.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

That true Comfort is to be sought in God alone.

WHatsoever I can desire, or imagine for my comfort, I look not for it in this life, but hereafter. For if I should alone have all the comforts of the World, and might enjoy all the delights thereof, it is certain that they could not long endure. Wherefore, my Soul, thou canst not be fully comforted, nor have perfect delight but in God, the Comforter of the Poor, and the Receiver of the Humble. Expect a while, my Soul, expect the divine Promise, and thou shalt have abundance of all good things in Heaven. If thou desire inordinately the things that are present, thou shalt lose the Celestial and Eternal. Have Temporal things in use, and the Eternal in desire. Thou canst not be filled with any temporal Goods, because thou art not created to enjoy them.

2. Although thou enjoyest all that is created, yet canst thou not be happy thereby nor blessed; but in God that hath created all things, thy whole Beatitude and Happiness consists: Not such as is seen, and commended by the foolish Lovers of the World; but such as the good faithful Servants of Christ expect, and the spiritual

and clean of Heart, whose Conversation is in Heaven, sometimes take a taste of. Vain and short is all manner of humane Comfort. Blessed and true is the Comfort which is received inwardly from Truth. A devout Man every-where carrieth with him Jesus his Comforter, and saith unto him, Be present with me, Lord Jesus, in every place and time. Let this be my comfort, to be always willing to want all humane comfort. And if thy comfort be wanting, let thy will and just proof be unto me, as the greatest comfort: For thou wilt not be angry always, neither wilt thou threaten for ever.

CHAP. XVII.

That all our care is to be placed in God.

SOn, suffer me to do with thee what I please; I know what is expedient for thee. Thou thinkest as Man; thou judgest in many things as humane Affection perswadeth thee. Lord, what thou sayst is true. Thy sollicitude for me is greater, than all the care that I can take for my self. For he standeth at too great a hazard, that casteth not his whole care upon thee. Lord, so that my Will may remain right and firm in thee, do with me whatsoever it shall please

pleaſe thee. For it cannot be but good, whatſoever thou doſt with me.

2. If it be thy Will I ſhould be in darkneſs, be thou bleſſed: And if it be thy Will I ſhould be in Light, be thou again bleſſed. If thou vouchſafeſt to comfort me, be thou bleſſed; and if thou wilt afflict me, be thou alſo ever bleſſed. Son, ſo thou oughteſt to be, as ready to ſuffer as to receive joy. Thou oughteſt to be as willing to be poor and needy, as plentiful and rich.

3. Lord, I will willingly ſuffer for thee, whatſoever thy pleaſure is ſhall befal me. I will receive indifferently from thy hand, good and evil, ſweet and ſowre, delightful and ſorrowful; and give thee thanks for all that happeneth unto me. Keep me from all ſin, and I will neither fear Death nor Hell; ſo as thou doſt not for ever caſt me from thee, and blot me out of the Book of Life, what tribulation ſoever befal me, ſhall not hurt me.

CHAP. XVIII.

That temporal Miseries, by the example of Christ, must be born patiently.

Son, I descended from Heaven for thy health; I took upon me thy Miseries, my Charity, and not any necessity drawing me thereunto, that thou mightest learn patience, and not refuse to bear temporal Miseries. For from the hour of my Birth, until my Death on the Cross, I was not without suffering of grief. I suffered great want of temporal things: I often heard many complaints against me: I bare patiently shame and reproaches; for Benefits, I received Ingratitude; for Miracles, Blasphemies; for heavenly Doctrine, Reprehensions.

2. Lord, for that thou were patient in thy life time, chiefly in fulfilling the Commandment of thy Father, it is reason that I miserable sinner should have patience in all things according to thy Will, and for my own health bear the burden of this corruptible Life, as long as thou wilt For although this present Life be burdensome, yet notwithstanding, it is now by thy Grace made very meritorious: And by thy example and the foot-steps of the Saints, more plain and tolerable to the weak. Yea, much more comfortable also, than it was

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in times past in the Old Law, when the Gate of Heaven remained shut: And the way also to Heaven seemed darker, when so few took care to seek after thy Kingdom. Neither they also that then were just, and were ordained to be saved, could enter into the heavenly Glory before thy Passion, and the debt of thy sacred Death was discharged.

3. O how great thanks am I bound to give thee, that thou hast vouchsafed to shew unto me, and to all faithful Souls, a direct and sure way to thy everlasting Kingdom! For thy Life is our way, and by holy Patience we go unto thee, that art our Crown. If thou hadst not gone before us and taught us, who would have taken care to follow thee? Alas! how many would stay behind, and remain far off, if they beheld not thy excellent Examples! Behold we are yet cold, although we have heard of so many of thy Wonders, and thy heavenly Documents! What would become of us if we had not so great light to follow thee?

CHAP. XIX.

Of suffering of Injuries: And who is proved to be truely Patient.

WHat is it thou sayst, Son? Cease to complain, considering my Passion, and that of my other Saints. Thou hast not yet made resistance to the shedding of Blood. It is but little thou sufferest, in comparison of them, that have suffered so much, so strongly tempted, so grievously afflicted, so many ways tried and exercised. Thou oughtest therefore to call to mind the heavy sufferings of others, that thou maiest the easier bear the little adversities which thou sufferest. And if they seem not little, beware least thy impatience be the cause thereof. Yet whether they be little or great, endeavour to bear all patiently.

2. How much the better thou dispossest thy self to suffering, so much the more wisely thou doest, and so much the more doest thou merit: Thou shalt more easily also endure it, if thy mind be prepared, and thy self accustomed thereunto. Do not say, I cannot suffer these things of such an one, at the Hands of such a person, nor, such things are not to be suffered by me, for he hath done me great wrong, and upbraided me with those things which I never

never thought of: But of another I will willingly suffer, and as I shall see cause. Such a thought is foolish; it considereth not the vertue of Patience, nor by whom it shall be crowned, but rather weigheth the Persons, and the Injuries offered.

3. He is not truely patient, that will not suffer but as much as he thinketh good, and by whom he listeth. But he that is indeed patient, mindeth not by whom he is exercised; whether by his Superiours, or some of his Equals, or by his Inferiours; whether by a good and holy Man, or by a perverse and unworthy person. But indifferently from all Creatures, how much soever, or how often soever any Adversity happeneth unto him, he taketh all thankfully as from the hands of God, and esteemeth it a great gain; Because nothing before God, how little soever, so it be suffered for God, can be without merit.

4. Be thou therefore always prepared for the Fight, if thou will have the Victory. Without combat thou canst not attain unto the Crown of Patience. If thou will not suffer, thou refusest to be crowned; but if thou desirest to be crowned, fight manfully, and endure patiently: Without labour there is no coming to rest; nor without fight can victory be obtained. Lord, let that be made possible to me by thy Grace, which seemeth impossible to me by Nature. Thou knowest that I can suffer little, and that I am quickly dismayed, when a small adversity ariseth. Let all exercise of tribulation be made pleasing unto me,

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and be welcome for thy Name: For to suffer and to be troubled for thee, is very profitable for my Soul.

CHAP. XX.

Of the acknowledging of our own Infirmities: And of the Miseries of this Life.

I Will confess against me my Injustice; I will confess unto thee, O Lord, my Infirmities. Oftentimes it is a small matter that discomforteth and grieveth me. I purpose to resist with courage, but when a small Temptation cometh, it bringeth me into very narrow straits. It is sometimes a very trifle, from whence great Temptations do proceed. And whilst I think my self somewhat safe, when I least expect it, I find my self sometimes overcome with a small blast.

2. Behold therefore, Lord, my imbecility and frailty every way known unto thee: Have mercy on me, and deliver me out of the mire of my Infirmities, that I stick not fast therein: Let me not for ever remain dejected. This is that which oftentimes beareth me back, and confoundeth me in thy sight, for that I am so subject to fall, and weak in resisting my evil Passions. And though I do not altogether consent, yet their continual

tinual Assaults are troublesome and grievous unto me: And it is a tedious and very irksome thing to live thus daily in strife. Hereby my Infirmity is made known unto me; for that wicked fancies do always much more easily enter in upon me, than they can be cast out again.

3 O mighty God of *Israel*! the zealous lover of faithful Souls, let it please thee to consider the labour and sorrow of thy Servant, and assist him in all whatsoever he undertaketh. Strengthen me with heavenly force, lest my old Man, my miserable Flesh, not fully as yet subject to the Spirit, prevail and get the upper-hand; against which I ought to fight, as long as I breathe in this miserable Life. Alas! what a kind of Life is this, where Tribulations and Miseries are never wanting! Where all is set with snares, and compassed with Enemies! For when one Tribulation or Temptation goeth away, another cometh, yea and during the first conflict also, many others come unlooked for, one after another.

4. And how can a life be loved that hath so many afflictions, and is subject to so many calamities and miseries? How is it called a life that begetteth so many deaths, and plagues? And yet it is loved, and many seek to delight themselves therein. The world is oftentimes blamed, that it is deceitful and vain, and yet it is not easily forsaken, because the inclinations of our flesh do too much overrule us. Some things draw us to love it, others to contemn it. To the love of the world do draw us

us the concupiſcence of the eyes, and the pride of life: But the pains and miſeries that do juſtly follow them, cauſeth a hatred and loathſomneſs thereof.

5. But alas wicked pleaſure overcometh the mind, which is given over to the world; and ſhe eſteemeth it a delight to be under thorns, becauſe ſhe hath neither ſeen nor taſted the ſweetneſs of God, and the inward delight of vertue. But they that perfectly contemn the world, and endeavour to live to God under holy diſcipline, theſe are not ignorant of the divine ſweetneſs, promiſed to the true forſakers of the world, and do more clearly ſee how grievouſly, the world erreth, how it is many wayes deceived.

CHAP. XXI.

That we are to reſt in God above all his Gifts.

ABove all things, and in all things, my Soul, thou ſhalt ever reſt in God; for he is the everlaſting reſt of the Saints. Grant me, moſt ſweet and loving Jeſu, to reſt in thee above all Creatures, above all Health and Beauty, above all Glory and Honour, above all Power and Dignity, above all Knowledge and Learning, above all Riches and Arts, above all Joy and Gladneſs, above all Fame and Praiſe,

Praise, above all Sweetness and Comfort, above all Hope and Promise, above all Merit and Desire, above all Gifts and Presents that thou canst give and impart unto us, above all Joy and Jubilee that the Mind of Man can receive and feel: Lastly, above Angels and Archangels, and above all the heavenly Host, above all visible and invisible things, and above all that, that thou art not my God.

2. For that thou, my Lord God, surpassest all; thou alone most High, thou alone most Powerful, thou alone most full and sufficient, thou alone most sweet and comfortable, thou alone most beautiful and loving, thou alone most noble and glorious above all things: In whom all good things together, both are perfectly, and ever have been, and shall be: And therefore it is too little, and not sufficient, whatsoever thou bestowest on me besides thy self, or revealest unto me of thy self, or promisest, whilst thou art not seen, and not fully obtained: For surely my Heart cannot rest, nor be fully contented, unless it rest in thee, and surmount all Gifts and Creatures whatsoever.

3. O my most beloved Spouse Christ Jesus, the most chaste Lover, the Governour of all Creatures! Who will give me Wings of true Liberty to fly, and rest in thee! O when shall it be fully granted me to consider in quietness of mind, and see how sweet thou art, my Lord God! When shall I fully recollect my self in thee, that for thy love I may not feel my self, but thee alone, above

all sence and feeling, in a manner not known unto all. But now I oftentimes lament, and bear my infelicity with grief. For that many evils occur in this vale of Miseries, which do often trouble, grieve, and darken me; often hinder and distract me, allure and entangle me, to the end I should not have free access unto thee, and that I should not enjoy thy sweet and heavenly embracings, which thou always givest to the blessed and celestial Spirits. Let my sighs and manifold Desolations on Earth move thee.

4. O Jesus, splendor of eternal Glory, and comfort of the Pilgrim-Soul, with thee is my tongue without voice, and my silence speaketh unto thee. How long doth my Lord delay to come? Let him come unto me his poor Servant, and make me glad. Let him put out his hand, to deliver me miserable Wretch, from all anguish. Come, come, blessed Lord; for without thee I shall have no joyful day, nor hour. Thou art my joy, and without thee there is nothing but want. A wretched Creature I am, and in a manner imprisoned, and loaden with Irons; until thou comfortest me with the light of thy presence, and givest me liberty, and shewest a favourable countenance unto me.

5. Let others seek what they please instead of thee; but for me, nothing else doth, nor shall delight me, but thou only my God, my Hope, my everlasting Health. I will not hold my peace, nor cease to pray, until thy Grace return again, and thou speak

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inwardly unto me. Behold I am here; behold I come unto thee, because thou hast called upon me. Thy Tears, and the desire of thy Soul, thy Humility, and the contrition of thy Heart, have inclined and brought me unto thee. And I said, Lord, I have called thee, and have desired to enjoy thee, being ready to forsake all things for thee. For thou first hast stirred me up, that I might seek thee. Blessed be thou therefore, O Lord, that hast shewed this goodness to thy Servant, according to the multitude of thy Mercies.

6. What hath thy Servant more to say before thee, but that he doth greatly humble himself in thy sight, always mindful of his own iniquity and baseness? For there is none like unto thee in all whatsoever is wonderful, in Heaven and Earth. Thy Words are good, thy Judgments true; and by thy Providence all things are governed. Praise therefore and glory be unto thee, O Wisdom of the eternal Father; let my Tongue, my Soul, and all Creatures together praise and bless thee.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

Of the remembrance of the manifold Benefits of God.

OPen, O Lord, my heart in thy Lavv, and teach me to vvalk in thy Commandment. Grant me to understand thy Will, and to remember thy Benefits, as vvell in general, as particular, vvith great reverence and diligent consideration: That henceforvvard I may be able vvorthily to give thee thanks. But I knovv and confess, that I am not able to give thee due thanks, for the favours vvhich thou bestovvest upon me, even in the least moment. I am less than the least of thy Benefits: And vvhen I consider the excellency of thy Majesty, the greatness thereof maketh my Spirit to faint.

2. All that we have in our Soul and Body, and whatsoever we possess outvvardly or invvardly, naturally or spiritually, are thy Benefits, and do praise thee, as Bountiful, Pious, and Good, from vvhom vve have received all that is Good. Although one have received more, another less, all notvvithstanding are thine, and vvithout thee even the least cannot be had. He that hath received greater, cannot glory of his ovvn desert, nor extol himself above others, nor insult over the lesser; for he is greater and bet-

better that aſcribeth leaſt unto himſelf, and is more humble and devout in rendering thanks. And he that eſteemeth himſelf baſeſt of all men, and judgeth himſelf moſt unworthy, is fitteſt to receive greater bleſſings.

3. And he that hath received fewer, ought not to be ſorry nor bear it impatiently, nor envy them that are enriched with greater ſtore, but attend rather unto thee and chiefly praiſe thy Goodneſs, for that thou beſtowveſt thy Gifts ſo bountifully, ſo freely, and ſo vvillingly, vvithout reſpect of perſons. All things proceed from thee, and therefore in all things thou art to be praiſed. Thou knovveſt vvhat is fit to be given to every one, and vvhy this man hath leſs, and he more, it is not ours but thine to determine: Who doth weigh in juſt meaſure the deſerts of every one.

4. Wherefore, my Lord God, I eſteem it as a great benefit, not to have much, vvherebyoutvvardly and before men I might ſeem vvorthy of praiſe and glory: So that he vvho conſidereth his ovvn poverty and baſeneſs, ought not therefore to conceive grief or ſorrovv, or to be therefore troubled, but rather to take great comfort, and to be glad: For that thou, O God, haſt choſen the poor and humble, and the deſpiſed of this World for thy ſelf, and for thy familiar and domeſtical friends. Witneſſes are thy Apoſtles themſelves, whom thou haſt appointed Princes over all the Earth. And yet they lived vvithout complaint in the World, ſo humble and ſimple, mean to

the

the eyes of men, vvithout all malice and deceit, that they rejoyced to receive contumelies for thy Name, and vvhat the World abhorreth, they embraced vvith great affection.

5. Nothing therefore ought so to rejoyce him that loveth thee, and acknovvledgeth thy Benefits, as the accomplishment of thy Will in himself, and the pleasure of thy eternal appointment; vvherevvith he ought to be so contented and comforted, that he would as willingly be the least, as any would wish to be the greatest: And as peaceable and content in the last as in the first place; and as willingly to be despised and contemned, and to be of no esteem or account, as to be preferred in Honour before all others, and to be greater in the World. For thy Will and the love of thy Glory, ought to be preferred before all things: And to comfort him more, and please him better, than all the Benefits which he hath received, or can desire.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

Of four things that bring much peace.

SOn, now I will teach thee the way of peace, and true liberty. Do, Lord, I beseech thee, as thou sayst, for I shall be very glad to hear it. Endeavour, my Son, to do rather the Will of another, than thy own. Ever choose rather to have less than more. Always seek the lowest place, and to be inferiour to every one. Wish always and pray that the Will of God may be wholly fulfilled in thee. Behold such a man entreth into the limits of peace and most quiet rest.

2. Lord, this thy short speech containeth much perfection. It is little in words, but full in sence, and aboundant in fruit. For if it could exactly be kept by me, then should I not so easily be troubled. For as often as I feel my self unquiet and afflicted, I find that I have strayed from this doctrine. But thou that canst all things, and ever lovest the good and profit of my Soul, increase in me thy Grace, that I may fulfil thy words, and perfect my own health.

A Prayer against evil Thoughts.

3. My Lord God, be not far from me my God, have regard to help me; for sun-

dry

dry Thoughts have risen up against me. And great fears, afflicting my Soul. How shall I pass through them without hurt? How shall I break them? I, saith he, will go before thee, and will humble the glorious of the Earth. I will open the doors of the Prison, and reveal unto thee hidden secrets. Do, Lord, as thou sayst, and let all evil Thoughts fly from before thy face. This is my hope, and my onely comfort, to fly unto thee in all tribulation, to trust in thee, to call upon thee from my heart, and to expect patiently thy comfort.

A Prayer for enlightning of the Mind.

4. Enlighten me, O good Jesu, with the clearness of inward light, and expel all darkness of my heart. Repress the many wavering Thoughts, and bear down the fury of the Temptation, which violently assault me. Fight strongly for me, and vanquish the evil Beast, that is, the alluring Concupiscences, that peace may be made in thy Virtue, and abundance of thy Praise found in thy holy Court, which is a pure Conscience. Command the Winds and Tempests; say unto the Sea, Be still; and to the North-wind, Blow not; and a great calm shall ensue.

5. Send forth thy light and thy truth, that they may shine upon the Earth; for I am empty and unprofitable Earth, until thou imparteſt thy light unto me. Pour out thy Grace from above, wash my Heart with heavenly dew, give Waters of Devotion

votion, to wash the face of the Earth, to bring forth good and perfect fruit. Lift up my mind, overchatged with the weight of Sin: Draw up my whole desire to heavenly Treasures, that having tasted the sweetness of celestial Happiness, it may loath to think of earthly Vanities.

6. Take me violently to thee, deliver me from all unstable comfort of Creatures; for no created thing can fully quiet and satisfie my desire. Joyn me unto thee with an unspeakable bond of Love; for thou only fillest the Mind of him that loves thee, and without thee all things are distastful.

CHAP. XXIV.

Of flying curious enquiry of the Life of others.

SOn, be not curious; trouble not thy self with idle cares. What is this or that to thee? do thou follow me: for what is it to thee, whether that man be such or no, or whether this man do, or speak, this or that? Thou shalt not need to answer for others, but shalt give account of thy self. Why therefore dost thou trouble thy self? Behold, I know every one what he is, and do see all things that are under the Sun; and do understand how it is with every one; what he thinketh, what he would, and at what his intention aimeth.

All

All things therefore are to be committed unto me; but do thou keep thy self in good peace, and suffer the unquiet to do as they will. Whatsoever they shall have done, or said, shall fall upon themselves, for they cannot deceive me.

2. Desire not too great fame in this World, nor to be known to many, nor to have the private love of Men: For these things breed distractions, and cause great darkness of heart. I would willingly utter my words, and reveal my secrets unto thee, if thou didst diligently observe my coming, and didst open the door of thy Heart unto me. Be careful and watch in Prayer, and humble thy self in all things.

CHAP. XXV.

Wherein doth the firm peace of the heart, and true profit consist.

SOn, I have said, Peace I leave to you, my peace I give to you: Not as the World giveth, do I give to you. All do desire Peace, but all care not for those things that appertain unto true peace. My peace is with the humble, and meek of heart. Thy peace shall be in much patience. If thou wilt hear me and follow my voice, thou mayst enjoy much peace. What then shall I do, Lord? In every thing to attend unto thy self what thou dost, and what thou

sayst;

sayest: And direct thy whole intention unto this, that thou mayst please me alone, and desiring or seeking nothing out of me. Of the sayings and doings of others, judge nothing rashly; neither do thou entangle thy self with things not committed unto thee: And doing thus, it may be thou shalt be little or seldom troubled.

2. But never to feel any trouble at all, nor to suffer any grief of heart or body, is not the estate of this life, but of everlasting rest. Think not therefore that thou hast found true peace, if thou feelest no sorrow, nor that then all is well, if thou have no adversary: Nor that it is perfect, if all things be done according to thy desire. Neither do thou then esteem highly of thy self, or imagine thy self to be specially beloved, if thou be in great Devotion and sweetness: For in these things a true lover of Virtue is not tried: Neither doth the profit and perfection of Man consist in having them.

3. Wherein then, Lord? In offering thy self from the very bottom of thy heart, unto the divine Service, not seeking thy own interest or commodity, neither in great nor little, neither in time nor eternity: So that with equal countenance, thou mayst persist in thanksgiving, both in prosperity and adversity, weighing all things with an equal ballance. If thou be of such courage and so patient in hope, that when inward comfort is withdrawn from thee, thou prepare thy heart to suffer greater matters, and not justifie thy self, as though thou oughtest

not to suffer these, and so great afflictions, but justifie me in whatsoever I appoint, and praise my holy Name; then thou walkest in the true and right way of peace; and thou shalt have undoubted hope to see my face again with great joy. And if thou attain to the full contempt of thy self; then shalt thou enjoy as great abundance of peace as thy banishment may permit.

CHAP. XXVI.

Of the excellency of a free Mind, which humble Prayer better deserveth, than Reading.

LOrd, it is the work of a perfect Man, never to slack his mind from the attentive thought of heavenly things, and as it were to pass without care through many cares: Not faintingly, but with a certain priviledge of a free mind, adhereing by inordinate affection to no Creature.

2. I beseech thee, most merciful God, preserve me from the cares of this Life; lest I should be too much entangled thereby; and from the many necessities of the Body, lest I should be enthraled in pleasure: From all hindrance of the Soul, lest broken with troubles I should be dejected and dismayed. I mean not from those things that worldly Vanity so greatly desireth;

reth; but from those Miseries, which as punishments do weigh down and hinder the Soul of thy Servant, with the general Curse of Mortality, that it cannot enter into liberty of Spirit, as often as it would.

3. O my God, the unspeakable Sweetness, make bitter unto me all carnal comfort, which may draw me away from the love of everlasting happiness, and wickedly allure me to it self with the force of certain present delight. Let not Flesh and Blood overcome me, O Lord; let not the World and the short Glory thereof deceive me; let not the Devil and his subtil Fraud supplant me. Give me force to resist, patience to suffer, and constancy to persevere. Give me instead of all comfort of the World, the most sweet unction of thy Spirit, and in lieu of carnal Love, pour into my Soul the Love of thy Name.

4. Behold, Meat, Drink, Cloaths, and other necessaries for the maintenance of the Body, are burdensome unto a fervent Spirit. Grant me to affect such nourishments in due measure, and not to be entangled with an over-great desire of them. It is not lawful to renounce them wholly, because Nature is to be maintained; but to desire superfluities, and those things that do rather delight than sustain, the Law of God forbiddeth; for otherwise the Flesh would rebel against the Spirit: Herein, I beseech thee, let thy hand govern me, and teach me that I may not exceed.

CHAP. XXVII.

That private Love most hindreth from the chiefest Good.

SOn, thou oughtest to give all for all, and to retain nothing of thy self. Know that the love of thy self doth hurt thee more than any thing in the World. According to the love and affection thou bearest them, so doth every thing cleave unto thee more or less. If thy love be pure, simple, and well ordered, thou shalt be free from bondage. Covet not that which thou mayst not have. Be not willing to have that which may hinder thee & deprive thee of inward Liberty. It is a wonderful thing that thou committest not thy self wholly unto me, from the bottom of thy heart, with all things that thou canst desire or have.

2. Why dost thou consume thy self with vain grief? Why tirest thou thy Mind with needless cares? Resign thy self to me, and thou shalt feel no loss at all. If thou seekest this or that, and wouldst be here or there, to enjoy thy own commodity and pleasure; thou shalt never be in quiet, nor free from trouble of mind: For in every thing, somewhat will be wanting, and in every place there will be somewhat that will cross thee.

3. Not

3. Not every external thing therefore attained, and heaped together helpeth thee: But it rather availeth if thou despise it, and doſt root it out from thy Heart; which thou muſt not underſtand onely of thy Revenues and Wealth, but of the deſire of Honour alſo, and vain Praiſe; all which do paſs away with this fading World. The place availeth little, if the Spirit of fervour be wanting: Neither ſhall that peace which is ſought abroad long continue, if the ſtate of thy Heart be deſtitute of a true foundation; that is, unleſs thou perſiſt in me, thou mayſt change, but not better thy ſelf; for when occaſion doth happen, thou ſhalt find that which thou ſoughteſt to fly, and perhaps more.

A Prayer for cleanſing the Heart, and obtaining of heavenly Wiſdom.

4. Confirm me, O Lord, with the grace of thy holy Spirit. Give me force to ſtrengthen my inward Man, and to purge my Heart from all unprofitable care and grief: Not to be drawn away with ſundry deſires of any thing either little or great: But to conſider all things, how they are tranſitory, and do quickly fade, and how that I my ſelf do alſo paſs away together with them; for nothing is permanent under the Sun, where all things are vanity and affliction of Mind. O how wiſe is he that ſo conſidereth them!

5. Grant me, O Lord, heavenly Wiſdom, that I may learn above all things to ſeek

and find thee, above all things to delight in thee, and to love thee, and to think of all created things as they are, according to the disposition of thy Wisdom. Grant me prudently to avoid him that flatters me, and to suffer patiently him that contradicts me. It is great Wisdom not to be moved with every blast of words; not to give ear to dangerous flattery. For so we shall go on securely in the way which we have begun.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Against the Tongue of Slanderers.

SOn, be not grieved, if some think evil of thee, and speak that which thou dost not willingly hear. Thou oughtest to judge the worst of thy self, and to think no man weaker than thy self. If thou walk according to Spirit, thou wilt not much esteem of flying words. It is not small Wisdom to be silent in times of evil, and inwardly to turn to me, and not to be troubled with the Judgments of Men.

2. Let not thy peace be in the Tongues of Men; for whether they judge well or evil, thou art nevertheless always the same. Where is true Peace and true Glory? Is it not in me? And he that coveteth not to please Men, nor feareth to displease them, shall enjoy much peace. From inordinate love

love and vain fear, ariſeth all diſquiet of Heart and diſtraction of the Senſes.

CHAP. XXIX.

How we ought to call upon God, and bleſs him when Tribulation draweth near.

BLeſſed, (O Lord) be thy Name for ever; ſince it pleaſeth thee that this Temptation and Tribulation ſhould fall upon me. I cannot flie it, but have need to flie to thee, that thou mayſt help me, and turn it to my good. Lord, I am now afflicted, and it is not well with me, I am much troubled with this preſent grief. And now, beloved Father, what ſhall I ſay? I am taken in narrow ſtraits, ſave me in this hour: Yet, therefore I am fallen in this hour, that thou mayſt be glorified when I ſhall be greatly humbled, and by thee delivered. Let it pleaſe thee, Lord, to deliver me; for poor Wretch that I am, what can I do, and whither ſhall I go without thee? Grant patience, Lord, even this time alſo. Help me, my God, and then I will not fear how much ſoever I be oppreſſed.

2. And now in this, what ſhall I ſay? Lord, thy will be done, I have well deſerved to be afflicted and grieved. Surely I

ought to bear it; and I would to God I might bear it with patience, until the tempest be passed over, and it become calm. But thy Omnipotent hand is able to take this Temptation from me, and to asswage the violence thereof, that I utterly sink not under it, as oftentimes heretofore thou hast done unto me, my Mercy. How much the more hard it is to me, so much the more easie is this change of thy mighty Hand to thee.

CHAP. XXX.

Of craving the aid and confidence of recovering Grace.

SOn, I am thy Lord, who do use to give comfort in the day of Tribulation; come unto me when it is not well with thee. This is that which most of all hindreth heavenly Consolation, that thou art slow in turning thy self unto Prayer; for before thou dost earnestly commend thy self to me, thou seekest many Comforts, and delightest thy self in outward things. And hence it proceedeth that all doth little profit thee, until thou consider that I am he that delivereth those that trust in me; and that out of me, there is neither powerful Help, nor profitable Counsel, nor Remedy that can continue. But now thou having recovered breath after the Tempest, gather strength

ſtrength again in the light of thy Mercies: For I am at hand, ſaith our Lord. to repair all, not onely entirely, but alſo abundantly.

2. Is there any thing hard to me? Or am I like unto him that promiſeth and performeth not? Where is thy Faith? Be firm and conſtant. Take courage and be patient; comfort will be given thee in due time. Attend me, expect I will come and cure thee. It is a Temptation that vexeth thee; and a vain fear that affrighteth thee. What elſe doth the care for future certainties bring thee, but ſorrow upon ſorrow? Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. It is a vain and unprofitable thing to be grieved, or to rejoyce for future things, that perhaps will never happen.

3. But it is incident to man to be deluded with ſuch imaginations: And a ſign of little courage to be ſo eaſily drawn away by the ſuggeſtion of our Enemy. For he careth not ſo he delude and deceive thee, whether it be true or falſe which he propoſeth: Whether he overthrow thee with the love of preſent, or the fear of future things. Let not therefore thy heart be troubled, neither do thou fear. Believe in me, and put thy truſt in my Mercy. When thou thinkeſt thy ſelf furtheſt off from me, oftentimes I am neareſt unto thee. When thou judgeſt that almoſt all is loſt, then oftentimes greateſt gain of Merit is at hand. All is not loſt when any thing falleth out contrary unto thee. Thou muſt not judge according to that which thou

feeleſt for the preſent; nor give thy ſelf over to any grief from whenceſoever it cometh, as though all hope of delivery were quite gone.

4. Think not thy ſelf wholly leſt, although for a time I have ſent thee ſome Tribulation, or withdrawn thy deſired comfort: for this is the way to the Kingdom of Heaven. And without doubt it is more expedient for thee, and the reſt of my Servants, that ye be exerciſed with many adverſities, than that ye ſhould have all things according to your deſires. I know the ſecret Thoughts of thy Heart, and that it is very expedient for thy Souls health, that thou be left ſometimes without taſte and feeling of ſpiritual Sweetneſs, leſt perhaps thou ſhouldſt be puffed up with good ſucceſs, and ſhouldſt pleaſe thy ſelf in that which thou art not. That, which I have given, I can take away, and reſtore it again when I pleaſe.

5. When I give it, is is mine; when I withdraw it, I take not any thing that is thine; for mine is every good and every perfect Gift. If I ſend thee affliction, or any croſs whatſoever, repine not, nor be not diſmaid; I can quickly lift thee up again, and turn all thy ſorrow into joy. Nevertheleſs I am juſt, and greatly to be praiſed, when I do all this unto thee.

6. If thou be wiſe and conſider well thy caſe, thou wilt never yield ſo cowardly to grief, for any adverſity that befals thee, but rather rejoyce and give thanks; yea to account this thy onely joy, that afflicting thee with

with ſorrows, I do not ſpare thee. As my Father hath loved me, I alſo love you, ſaid I unto my beloved Diſciples; whom certainly I ſent not to temporal Joys, but to great Conflicts; not to Honours, but to Contempts; not to Idleneſs, but to Labours; not to Reſt, but to bring much Fruit in patience. My Son, remember theſe Words.

CHAP. XXXI.

Of the contempt of all Creatures, to find our Creator.

LOrd, I ſtand yet in need of great Grace, if I muſt go ſo far as that no Man or Creature can hinder me. For as long as any thing holdeth me, I cannot flie freely unto thee. He deſired to flie with great liberty that ſaid, Who will give me Wings like a Dove, and I will flie and reſt? What thing more quiet than a ſimple Eye; and what more free, than he that deſireth nothing upon Earth? Man ought therefore to aſcend above all Creatures, and perfectly to forſake himſelf, and to remain in exceſs of mind: And conſider that thou, who art the Maker of all things, haſt nothing amongſt Creatures like unto thee. And unleſs a Man be free from the affection of all Creatures, he cannot with freedom of mind attend unto divine things.

And

And for this cause there are so few contemplative men to be found, for that few can wholly sequester themselves from fading Creatures.

2. Much grace is necessary to lift up a Soul, and to carry it above it self. And unless a man be lifted up in spirit, and delivered from all Creatures, and wholly united unto God, whatsoever he knoweth, and whatsoever he hath, is of little account. Long shall he be little, and lie in earthly baseness, that esteemeth any thing great, but the one only unmeasurable and eternal Good; for whatsoever is not God, is nothing. There is great difference between the Wisdom of a spiritual and devout person, and the Knowledge of a learned and studious Clerk. Far more noble is that Learning which floweth from above from the divine Influence, than that which is painfully gotten by the Wit of Man.

3. There are many that desire Contemplation, but they endeavour not to exercise those things that are required thereunto. It is a great hindrance that we rest in signs and sensible things; and have little true mortification. I know not what it is, nor by what Spirit we are led, nor what we pretend, we that seem to be called Spiritual, that we take so much pains, and so great care for transitory and base things, and scarce or seldom think of our own inward profit, with full recollection of our Senses.

4. Alas! presently after a sleight recollection, we break forth, and weigh not our Words

Words with diligent examination. We mind not where our Affections ly; nor bewail the Impurity and many Faults that are in all our Actions. For all Flesh had corrupted her way, and therefore did that general Flood ensue. Since our inward Affection then is much corrupted, it must needs be that our Actions proceeding thereof, be corrupted, as a sign of the want of inward vigour. From a pure Heart proceedeth the fruit of a good Life.

5. We ask how much one hath done; but how vertuous his Actions are, is not so diligently considered. We enquire whether he be strong, rich, beautiful, handsome, a good writer, a good singer, or a good labourer; but how poor he is in spirit, how patient, and meek, how devout and spiritual, is seldom spoken of. Nature respecteth outward things, Grace turneth herself to the inward Vertues. That is often deceived; this hath her trust in God, to the end she be not deceived.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXII.

Of Denial of ourselves, and forsaking all our Affections.

SOn, thou canst not possess perfect liberty, unless thou wholly deny thy self. All such as be lovers of themselves, are bound in fetters; they are covetous, curious, wanderers, seekers of ease, and not of those things that appertain to Jesus Christ; but oftentimes devising, and framing that which will not continue. For all shall perish that proceedeth not from God. Keep this short and compleat Word: Forsake all, and thou shalt find all. Leave thy inordinate Desires, and thou shalt find rest. Consider this well; and when thou hast fulfilled it, thou shalt understand all.

2. Lord, this is not one days work, nor Childrens sport: yea, in this short Sentence all the perfection of religious persons is included. Son, thou must not go back, nor presently be dejected, when thou hearest the way of the perfect; but rather be stirred up to more worthy and noble attempts, or at least to conceive an earnest desire thereof. I would it were so well with thee, and thou wert come so far, that thou wert no longer a lover of thy self, but didst stand meerly at my beck, and at his, whom I have appointed a Father over thee:

Then

Then thou ſhouldſt exceedingly praiſe me, all thy life would paſs away in joy and peace. Thou haſt yet many things to forſake, which unleſs thou wholly reſign over unto me, thou ſhalt not attain to that which thou deſireſt. I counſel thee to buy of me purified Gold, that thou mayſt become rich, that is, heavenly Wiſdom, which treadeth under-foot all baſe and earthly things. Set little by the Wiſdom of this World; eſteem not of the Contentment of Men, nor thy own Fancies.

3. I ſaid, that thou ſhouldſt buy the mean and baſe things with the precious, and thoſe that were with Men of great eſteem. For true heavenly Wiſdom ſeemeth very baſe, of ſmall account, and is ſcarce thought of by Men; for that eſteems not highly of it ſelf, nor ſeeketh to be magnified upon Earth; which many praiſe from the teeth outward, but in their life they are far from it; yet is it the precious Pearl which is hidden from many.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Of Inconstancy of the Heart, and of directing our final Intentions unto God.

SOn, trust not to thy Affection; that which now is, will quickly change into another. As long as thou livest, thou art subject to mutability, even against thy will; so that now thou art merry, now sad, now quiet, now troubled, now devout, now distracted, now diligent, now idle, now heavy, now light. But he that is wise, and well instructed in spirit, remaineth always one in the midst of the changes, not heeding what he seeketh in himself, or which may the wind of mutability blow to: but that the whole intention of his mind may tend, as it ought, to the most perfect and best end. For so he may continue one and the self-same, without any change in the midst of so many sundry chances, directing always the sincere eye of his intention unto me.

2. And how much purer the eye of the intention is, so much the more constantly doth he pass through the variety of many contrary waves. But in many things the eye of a sincere intention waxeth blind, for it quickly looketh upon some delightsome object that occurreth. And it is rare to

to find one that is wholly free from all blemish of seeking himself. So the Jews in times past, came into *Bethania* to *Martha* and *Mary*, not for Jesus alone, but to see *Lazarus* also. The eye of our intention therefore, is to be purged, that it may be sincere and pure, and to be directed unto me, neglecting the multitude and variety of earthly objects.

CHAP. XXXIV.

That God is sweet above all things, and in all things, to him that loveth.

BEhold, my God, and all things! What would I have more, and what can I desire more happy? O sweet and comfortable Word! But to him that loveth the Word, not the World, nor in those things that are in the World. My God, and all things; enough is said to him that loveth to repeat it often. For when thou art present, all things do yield delight; but when thou art absent, all becomes irksome. Thou givest quiet of Heart and much peace, and pleasant joy. Thou makest Men think well of all, and praise thee in all things: Neither can any thing please us long without thee: But if it be pleasant and delightsome, thy grace must be present, and it must be seasoned with the sweetness of thy Wisdom.

2. What

2. What can be distastful unto him, to whom thou art pleasing: And whom thou delightest not, what can be to him pleasant! But the wise in this World, and who have their contentment in sensual things, cannot attain to thy wisdom: For in the World is much vanity, and in the flesh is death. But they, that follow thee by the contempt of wordly things, and mortification of the flesh, are proved to be truly wise: For they are changed from vanity to truth, from flesh to spirit. To these God is sweet, and what good soever is found in creatures, they wholly refer unto the praise of their Maker. Notwithstanding great, yea very great, is the difference between the sweetness of the Creator, and of the Creature, of Eternity and of Time, of uncreated and created light.

3. O everlasting Light, surpassing all created lights, cast forth the beams of thy brightness from above, and pierce the most inward corners of my heart: Purify, rejoyce, clarify, and quicken my spirit with all the powers thereof, that I may cleave unto thee with excess of unspeakable joy. O when will that blessed and desired hour come, that I may be filled with thy presence, and thou maist be unto me all in all things! As long as this is not granted me, I shall not have full nor perfect joy. Alas! My old Man yet liveth in me, he is not wholly crucified, he is not perfectly dead. He doth yet covet strongly against the spirit, and moveth evil Wars, and suffereth not the Kingdom of my soul to be in peace.

4. But

4. But thou, that ruleſt the Powers of the Sea, and aſſwageſt the motion of the Waves, riſe and help me: Diſſipate the people that deſire War, and deſtroy them in thy might, and let thy hand be glorified: for there is no hope nor refuge for me, but in thee, my Lord God.

CHAP. XXXV.

That there is no ſecurity from Temptation in this Life.

SOn, there is no ſecurity in this Life; as long as thou liveſt thou ſhalt always have need of ſpiritual Armour. Thou liveſt among enemies, and art aſſaulted on all ſides. If therefore thou defendeſt not thy ſelf on every ſide with the ſhield of Patience, thou canſt not be long unwounded. Moreover, if thou fix not thy Heart on me with a ſincere will to ſuffer all things for me, thou canſt not ſuſtain the heat of this battle, nor get the victorious Crown which they have, that are in glory. Thou oughteſt therefore manfully to go through all, and to uſe a ſtrong hand againſt whatſoever withſtandeth thee: For to him that overcometh, is given Manna; and to the negligent is left much wo.

2. If thou ſeekeſt reſt in this World, how wilt thou then attain to everlaſting reſt? Give not thy ſelf to much eaſe, but to much pati-

patience. Seek true peace, not in Earth, but in Heaven; not in Men, nor in any Creature, but in God alone. Thou oughtest for the love of God willingly to endure whatsoever Griefs, Temptations, Anxieties, Necessities, Infirmities, Injuries, Detractions, Reprehensions, Humiliations, Confusions, Corrections, and Contempts: These help to the attaining of Vertue; these try a Novice of Christ; these make a heavenly Crown. I will give an everlasting Reward for a short Labour, and infinite Glory for transitory Confusion.

3. Thinkest thou, that thou shalt always have spiritual Consolations at will? My Saints had not so; but many Afflictions, sundry Temptations, and many Discomforts: All which they endured patiently, and trusted rather in God, than in themselves; knowing that the sufferings of this time, are not condign to the deserving of future glory. Wilt thou have that in an instant, which many after tears, and great labours have hardly obtained? Expect the coming of thy Lord, do manfully, be of good courage: Fear not, do not fly, but offer both Body and Soul for the glory of God. I will reward thee in most plentiful manner, and I will be with thee in all thy Tribulations.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Againſt the vain Judgments of Men.

SOn, fix thy Heart ſtedfaſtly on God, and fear not the Judgments of Men, when thy Conſcience giveth teſtimony of Juſtice and Innocency. It is a good and a happy thing to ſuffer in that ſort: Neither will it be burdenſome to an humble mind, nor to him that truſteth rather in God, than in himſelf. The moſt part of Men are given to talk much, and therefore little care is to be had of their Words: neither is it poſſible to ſatisfie all. Though the Apoſtle endeavoured to pleaſe all in our Lord, and made himſelf all unto all, yet he little regarded that he was judged by humane day.

2. He did for the edification and health of others, as much as he could, and lay in him; yet could he not hinder, but that he was ſometimes judged, and deſpiſed by others. Therefore he committed all to God, who knew all, and defended himſelf with patience and humility againſt evil Tongues, and ſuch as thought Vanities and Lyes, and ſpake what they liſted: yet ſometimes notwithſtanding he anſwered, leſt the weak might have received ſcandal by his ſilence.

3. Who

3. Who art thou, that feareſt a mortal Man? To day he is, and to morrow he is not ſeen. Fear God, and the terrour of Men ſhall not trouble thee. What harm can the Words or Injuries of any do thee? He rather hurteth himſelf than thee: Neither can he avoid the Judgment of God, be he what he will. Have thou God before thy Eyes, and contend not with complaining words. And if for the preſent thou ſeemeſt to be trodden down, and to ſuffer ſhame and confuſion vvithout deſert, do not repine, neither do thou leſſen thy Crovvn by thy impatience; but rather lift up thy Eyes to me in Heaven. I am able to deliver thee from ſhame and vvrong, and to repay every one according to their Works.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXVII.

Of a full and pure resignation of ourselves, for the obtaining freedom of Heart.

SOn, leave thy self, and thou shalt find me. Make choice of nothing, appropriate nothing to thy self, and thou shalt ever gain For greater Grace shall alwayes be given thee, when thou dost perfectly resign thy self, and not turn back to take thy self again. Lord how often shall I resign my self? And wherein shall I forsake my self? Alwayes, and in every thing, as well in little as in great. I do except nothing, but do require that thou be as it were naked and void of all things. Otherwise, how canst thou be perfectly mine, and I thine, unless both within and without thou be free from all self-will? And how much the sooner thou dost this, so much the better shalt thou find thy self, and how much the more fully and sincerely thou dost it, so much the more shalt thou please me, and so much the more shalt thou gain.

2. Some there are that resign themselves, but with some exception: For they put not their whole trust in God, and

and therefore do labour to provide for themselves. Some also at the first do offer all, but afterwards being assailed with Temptations, do return again to that which they had left, and therefore they go not forwards in the way of vertue. These shall not attain to the true liberty of a pure Heart, nor to the grace of my Divine familiarity, unless they first make an entire resignation, and offer themselves a daily Sacrifice unto me. For without this, can never be obtained the union with me, wherewith my Saints enjoy me.

3. I have often said unto thee, and now again I say the same: Forsake thy self, resign thy self, and thou shalt enjoy internal peace. Give all for all; seek nothing, require nothing, repose thy self purely, and with a full confidence in me, and I will give my self unto thee, and darkness shall not cover thee. Let this be thy whole Endeavour, let this be thy Prayer, let this be thy Desire, that casting off all propriety, thou mayst all naked follow thy Saviour Jesus; and dying to thy self, mayst live Eternally to me. Then shall vain fantasies, evil Perturbations, and all superfluous cares flie away: Then shall immoderate fear leave thee, and inordinate love shall die.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

Of good Government in outward things: And out of recourse to God in dangers.

SOn, thou oughtest with all diligence to procure, that in every place and action, or external business, thou be inwardly free, and master of thy self, and that all things be under thy disposition, and thou not subject to them; that thou maiest be Lord and Master of thy actions, not a Servant or a Hireling, but rather a Free man, and a true Hebrew, belonging to the lot and freedom of the Son of God, who put the things that are present under their Feet, and place their thoughts on that which is Eternal: Who look on transitory things with the left Eye, and with the right do behold the things of Heaven: Who suffer not themselves to be drawn to cleave unto them, but rather dispose and use them, as they are ordained by the Creator of all, who hath left nothing in his Creatures without due order.

2. If thou remain firm and stedfast in all events, and dost not weigh by the outward appearance, nor with a carnal Eye, the things which thou seest and hearest? but presently in every occasion dost

enter with *Moses* into the Tabernacle, to ask Counsel of our Lord, thou shalt sometimes hear the Divine and Celestial Oracle, and shalt return instructed of many things both present and to come. *Moses* had always recourse to the Tabernacle for the deciding of all Doubts and obscure Questions, and fled to the help of Prayer, for the remedy of the Iniquity and Dangers of Men. So oughtest thou in like manner to flie to the Closet of thy Heart, earnestly craving the Divine Favour. For the Scripture testifieth, that therefore was *Joshua* and the Children of *Israel* deceived by the *Gibeonites*, because they consulted not first with God, but giving too lightly credit to fair Words, were deluded with counterfeit Piety.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIX.

That a Man must not be over earnest in his Affairs.

SOn, always commit thy cause to me, I will dispose well of it in due time: Expect my ordination, and thou shalt find it will be for thy good. Lord, I do most willingly commit all unto thee, for my care can profit little. O that I adhered not too much to future events, but offered my self with all readiness of mind to thy divine Pleasure.

2. Son, oftentimes a man doth earnestly labour for that which he desireth, and when he hath gotten it, he beginneth to be of another mind, and not to esteem so much of it, as before he did: For Mans Affections do not long continue fixed on one thing, but do pass one from another. It is therefore a matter, not of least moment, to forsake ourselves even in the least things.

3. The true spiritual profit of Man, consisteth in denying and forsaking of himself: And he that is resigned, liveth in great freedom and security. But the ancient Enemy, who always laboureth to withstand the Servants of God, omitteth at no time his wonted Temptations, but day and night lieth still in wait, to cast the unwary,

if he can, into the snare of deceit. Watch therefore and pray, saith our Lord, that you enter not into Temptation.

CHAP. XL.

That Man hath no good of himself, nor any thing whereof he can glory.

LOrd, what is Man, that thou art mindful of him, or the Son of Man, that thou vouchsafest to visit him? What hath Man deserved that thou shouldst give him thy Grace? Lord, what cause have I to complain, if thou forsake me? Or if thou dost not that which I desire, what can I justly say against it? Surely, this I may truely think and say: Lord, I am nothing, I can do nothing, I have nothing that is good of my self, but in all things I do fail, and am defective, and do ever tend to nothing: And unless thou help me, and dost interiourly instruct me, I become cold, and am dissolved.

2. But thou, O Lord, art always the same, and endurest for ever; always Good, Just, and Holy, doing all things well, justly, and holily, and disposing all things with Wisdom. But I that am more inclined to fall, than to go forwards, do never continue in one estate: For seven different times are changed over me, yet doth it soon turn to the better, when it so pleaseth thee, and when

when thou vouchsafest to stretch forth thy helping hand. For thou alone canst help me without the favour of Man, and so strengthen me, that my countenance shall be no more changed, but my Heart shall be converted, and rest in thee alone.

3. Wherefore if I could once perfectly forsake all humane comfort, either for love of Devotion, or for my own necessity, which enforceth me to seek after thee (for none else can comfort me) then might I well hope in thy Grace, and rejoyce in the gift of new Consolation.

4. Thanks be unto thee from whence all proceedeth, as often as it goeth well with me: But I am meer Vanity, and nothing before thee, an unconstant and weak Man. Whereof then can I glory? Or why do I desire to be esteemed of? Is it not of nothing? And this is most vain. Truely Vain-glory is an evil plague and very great Vanity, because it draweth from true Glory, and robbeth the Soul of heavenly Grace. For whilst a Man pleaseth himself, he displeaseth thee: Whilst he gapeth after the praise of Men, he is deprived of true Vertue.

5. But true Glory, and holy Exultation, and Joy, is for a Man to glory in thee, and not in himself; to rejoyce in thy Name, and not in his own Vertue, nor to delight in any Creature but for thee. Praised be thy Name, not mine: Magnified be thy Name: Magnified be thy Work, not mine. Let thy holy Name be for ever blessed, but to me let no part of mens Praises be given. Thou art my Glory, thou art the Joy of my

Heart. In thee will I glory and rejoyce all the day; but for my self I will not joy, but in my infirmities.

6. Let the Jews seek the glory, which one man giveth to another: I will desire this, which is from God alone. For all humane Glory, all temporal Honour, all worldly Highness, compared to thy eternal Glory, is vanity and folly. O my Truth, my Mercy, my God, most blessed Trinity, to thee alone be all Praise, Honour, Vertue, and Glory for all Eternity.

CHAP. XLI.

Of the contempt of all temporal Honours.

SOn, trouble not thy self, if thou seest others honoured and advanced, and thy self contemned and debased. Lift up thy Heart unto me in Heaven, and the contempt of Men in Earth will not grieve thee. Lord, we are blind, and quickly seduced with Vanity. If I look well into my self, I cannot say that any Creature hath done me wrong; and therefore I cannot justly complain of thee.

2. But because I have often and grievously sinned against thee, all Creatures do justly take arms against me: For shame and contempt is due unto me, but unto thee praise, honour, and glory. And unless

less I do so prepare my self, that I be willing, and do rejoyce to be despised and forsaken of all Creatures, and to be esteemed nothing at all, I cannot obtain internal strength and peace, nor be spiritually enlightned, nor wholly united unto thee.

CHAP. XLII.

That our peace is not to be placed in Men.

SOn, if the peace thou hast with any, be grounded on the Opinion which thou hast of him, or on the contentment thou receivest in his company, thou shalt ever be unconstant and subject to disquiet: But if thou have recourse to the ever-living and eternal Truth, a Friend going from thee or dying shall not grieve thee. The love of thy Friend ought to rest in me, and for me is he to be beloved, whosoever he be, whom thou thinkest well of, and is truely dear unto thee in this life No friendship can avail, or continue without me; neither is the love true and pure, which they have, whose Hearts are not joyned together by me. Thou oughtest to be so dead to such affections of beloved Friends, that (forasmuch as appertaineth unto thee) thou shouldest wish to be without all company of Men. Man approacheth so much the

neaer unto God, by how much the further off he departeth from all earthly Comfort; so much the higher also he ascendeth unto God, by how much lower he descendeth into himself, and how much the baser he is in his own conceit.

2. But he that attributeth any good unto himself, hindreth the coming of Gods Grace into him. For the Grace of the Holy Ghost ever seeketh an humble Heart. If thou couldst perfectly annihilate thy self, and purge thy self of all created love, then should there flow into thee great abundance of my Grace. When thou castest thy eyes on Creatures, the sight of thy Creator is taken from thee. Learn to overcome thy self in all things, for the love of thy Creator; and then shalt thou be able to attain to heavenly Knowledge. How little soever it be, if it be inordinately loved and regarded, it defileth the Soul, and hindreth the enjoying of the chiefest Good.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLIII.

Against vain and secular Knowledge.

SOn, let not the fair speeches, and subtil sayings of Men move thee: For the Kingdom of God consisteth not in Words, but in Vertue. Observe well the words which I speak; for they enflame the Heart, and enlighten the Mind, induce Compunction, and bring sundry Comforts. Do thou never read to shew thy self to be Learned or Wise; but labour to mortifie thy Vices; for that will profit thee more, than the knowledge of many hard and difficult Questions.

2. When thou shalt have read and known many things, thou oughtest ever to return to one beginning. I am he that teacheth Man all Knowledge, and do give to little ones a more clear Understanding, than can ...ught by Man. He therefore to whom I speak, shall quickly be Wise, and shall profit much in Spirit. Wo be to them that enquire many curious things of Men, and do little desire to know the way how to serve me. The time will come when the Master shall appear, Christ the Lord of Angels, to hear the Lessons of all, that is, to examine the Consciences of every one: And then he will search *Hierusalem* with a Candle, and the hidden things of dark-

ness shall be laid open, and the inventions of Tongues shall be silent.

3. I am he that in an instant doth raise up the humble Mind, to understand more reasons of everlasting Truth, than can be gotten by ten years study in Schools. I teach without noise of Words, without confusion of Opinions, without ambition of Honour, without contention of Arguments. I am he that teacheth to despise earthly things, to loath things present, to seek the everlasting, to delight in the things that are eternal, to fly Honours, to suffer Scandals, to place all hope in me, to desire nothing out of me, and above all things fervently to love me.

4 For one by loving me entirely, learned divine things, and spake Wonders; he profited more in forsaking all things, than in studying subtilties. To some I speak ordinary things, to others things more special; to some I appear sweetly by signs and figures, but to some I reveal Mysteries with much light. The voice of Books is one, but it teacheth not all Men alike. For I am the internal Teacher; I am the Truth, the Searcher of the Heart, the Understander of Thoughts, the setter forwards of good Words, distributing to every one according to my Will.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLIV.

Of not drawing outward things to ourselves.

SOn, in many things thou ought'st to be ignorant, and esteem thy self as dead upon Earth; and as one to whom the whole World is crucified. Thou must also pass over many things with a deaf ear, and rather think of that which appertaineth to thy peace. It is more profitable to turn thy eyes from the sight of unpleasing things, and to leave to every one his own Opinion, than to strive with contentious Words. If thou standest well with God, and considerest his Judgmeents, thou shalt the more easily yield to the Will of others.

2. O Lord, to what an estate are we come! Behold, we bewail a temporal Loss, and for a little gain we toil and spare no labour; and the spiritual damage of our Soul is forgotten, and hardly at length called to mind. That which little or nothing profiteth, is always remembred, and that which is chiefly necessary, is negligently passed over, because mans nature carrieth him to external things; and unless he quickly return unto himself, he lieth drowned in them with delight.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLV.

That credit is not to be given to all Men: And how prone Man is to offend in Words.

HElp me, Lord, in my tribulation, for vain is the defence of Man. How often have I been deceived, finding want of Faith, where I thought it sure? And how often have I found Faith where I least expected it? It is vain therefore to trust in Men; but the safety of the Just, O Lord, is in thee. Blessed be thou, my God, in all things that befal us. We are weak and inconstant, quickly deceived, and soon changed.

2. Who is he, that is able so warily to keep himself, that he never fall into any deceit or doubt? But he that trusteth in thee, O Lord, and seeketh thee with a pure Heart, doth not easily fall; and if he fall into any tribulation, be he never so much entangled, yet he shall quickly be delivered or comforted by thee; For thou wilt not forsake him for ever that trusteth in thee. A Friend is rare to be found, that continueth faithful in his Friends distress; but thou, O Lord, thou alone art faithful at all times, and there is none like unto thee.

3. O how wise was the holy Soul that said; My mind is firmly setled and grounded

ded in Christ! If it were so with me, then would not humane fear so easily trouble me, nor words move me. Who can foresee all things? Who is able to beware before hand of future evils? If things even foreseen do oftentimes hurt us, how can things unlooked for choose but wound us grievously? But why did I not provide better for my self, miserable Wretch! Why also have I so easily given credit to others? But alas we are Men, and God knoweth, weak and frail Men, although by many we are reputed and called Angels. To whom shall I give credit, Lord? To whom but to thee? Thou art the Truth that neither dost deceive, nor canst be deceived. And on the other side, every Man is a lier, weak, unconstant, and subject to fall, especially in words: And therfore we must not easily give credit even to that, which in outward shew seemeth at the first a certain Truth.

4. O with how great Wisdom hast thou warned us to take heed of men! And because the enemies of man are his familiar and domestical acquaintance, not to trust, if one should say: Behold here, or behold there. I am taught to my cost, and I would to God I might thereby encrease my care, and not my folly. Be wary, saieth one, be wary, keep unto thy self what I tell thee: And whilst I hold my peace, and think it is secret, he cannot keep that secret, Which he desired should be secret, but presently discloseth me and himself, and goeth his way.

way. From such tales, and such improvident People, protect me, Lord, that I fall not into their hands, nor ever commit such errours Give me grace, my God, to observe truth and constancy in my words, and remove far from me a deceitful tongue. What I am not willing to suffer, I ought by all means to avoid.

5. O how good and quiet a thing it is to be silent, and not to talk of others, nor to believe all that is said, nor easily to report what we have heard; to lay ones self open to few; always to seek after thee, the beholder of the Heart; not to be carried about with every wind of Words, but to desire that all things both within and without, be accomplished according to thy Will and Pleasure? How secure is it for the keeping of heavenly Grace, to fly the sight of Men; and not to seek those things that seem to cause admiration abroad, but to follow that with all diligence, which bringeth amendment of Life, and encrease of fervour.

6. To how many hath Vertue, known and overhastily commended, been hurtful? How profitable hath Grace been, kept with silence in this mortal Life, which is nothing but a perpetual Temptation, and a warfare?

CHAP.

CHAP. XLVI.

Of putting our trust in God, when evil Words arise.

SOn, be constant, and put thy trust in me, for what are Words, but Words? They pass through the Air, but hurt not. If thou be guilty, determine willingly to amend thy self; if thou be innocent, resolve to suffer this willingly, at least for God. It is a small matter to suffer sometimes a few Words, if thou hast not yet the courage to endure stripes And why do small matters go to thy Heart, but for that thou art yet carnal, and regardest Men more than thou oughtest? Because thou art afraid to be despised, therefore thou wilt not be reprehended for thy faults, and thereby seekest shadows of excuses.

2. But look better into thy self and thou shalt see, that the World yet liveth in thee, and a vain desire to please Men. For when thou refusest to be humbled, and reproved for thy faults, it is surely evident, that thou art neither truely humble, nor dead to the World, nor the World perfectly crucified to thee. But give diligent ear unto my Words, and thou shalt little respect ten thousand Words spoken by Men. Behold, if all should be spoken against thee that could be most maliciously invented, what would

would it hurt thee, if thou sufferedst it to pass, and mad'st no reckoning at all of it? Could all those Words pluck as much as one hair from thy head?

3. But he that hath not his Heart within him, nor God before his eyes, is easily moved with every little dispraise; whenas he that trusteth in me, and confideth not in his own Judgment, shall be free from humane fears. For I am the Judge and the Discerner of all secrets. I know how the matter passed; I know him that offereth the injury, and him that suffereth it. From me hath this Word proceeded: This hath happened by my permission; that out of many Hearts. Thoughts may be revealed. I shall judge the guilty, and the innocent; but by a secret Judgment, I would beforehand try them both.

4. The Testimony of Men oftentimes deceiveth Mankind: But my Judgment is always true; it shall stand, and not be overthrown. It is commonly hidden and secret, and not known in every thing, but to few; notwithstanding it never erreth, neither can it err, although to the eyes of the foolish it seems not right. Men ought therefore to return to me in every Judgment, and not to stand in their own Opinions. For the just Man will not be troubled, whatsoever happeneth unto him for God: And if any thing be wrongfully brought forth against him, he will not much care; neither will he vainly be glad, if by others he be with reason excused. For he considereth that I am he that searcheth

the

the Heart and Reins, and do judge not according to the outward face, nor humane appearance. For that is oftentimes found culpable in my sight, that in the Judgment of Men is commendable.

5. O Lord my God, the Just Judge, strong and patient, thou knowest the frailty and perversity of Man; be thou my strength, all my trust, for my own Conscience sufficeth me not. Thou knowest that which I cannot teach unto, and therefore in every reprehension I ought to have submitted my self, and to have born it patiently: Vouchsafe mercifully to pardon me, as often as I have failed herein, and give me again grace of greater sufferance. For thy bountiful Mercy is more available to me for the obtaining pardon, than my conceived Justice for the defence of my hidden Conscience. Although my Conscience accuse me not, yet I cannot hereby justifie my self; for if thy Mercy be away, no Man living shall be justified in thy sight.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLVII.

That all grievous things are to be endured for life everlasting.

SOn, let not the pains dismay thee which thou hast undertaken for me, neither be thou discomforted for the tribulations which do befal thee; but let my promise strengthen and comfort thee in all events. I am able to reward thee above all measure. Thou shalt not long toil here, nor always be oppressed with grief. Attend a while, and thou shalt see a speedy end of thy evils. There will come an hour when all labour and trouble shall cease. Little and short is all that passeth away with time.

2. Do as thou dost; labour faithfully in my Vineyard; I will be thy Reward. Write, read, sing, mourn, observe silence, pray, suffer crosses manfully; life everlasting is worthy of all these and greater combats. Peace shall come in the day which is known unto our Lord, and it shall not be day nor night, to wit, of this time, but everlasting light, infinite brightness, stedfast peace, and secure rest. Then thou shalt not say, Who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death? Nor cry, Wo be unto me, for that my dwelling in a strange Country is prolonged! For Death shall be thrown down, and Health shall be without decay; no anxiety;

ciety; bleſſed joy, ſweet and glorious company.

3. O if thou hadſt ſeen the everlaſting Crowns of the Saints in Heaven, and with how great glory they now rejoyce, who in times paſt were contemptible to this World, and eſteemed unworthy of life it ſelf; truely thou wouldſt preſently humble thy ſelf even unto the Earth: And wouldſt rather ſeek to be under the feet of all, than to have command, ſo much as over one: Neither wouldſt thou deſire pleaſant days of this life, but rather rejoyce to be afflicted for God, and eſteem it thy greateſt gain to be reputed as nothing amongſt men.

4. O if thou hadſt a feeling of theſe things, and didſt ſuffer them to enter into the depth of thy Heart, how durſt thou ſo much as once to complain! Are not all painful labours to be endured for everlaſting life? It is no ſmall matter to loſe or to gain the Kingdom of Heaven. Lift up thy eyes therefore unto Heaven; behold I, and all my Saints with me, who in this World had great conflicts, do now rejoyce, now are comforted, now are ſecure, now do reſt, and ſhall remain with me everlaſtingly in the Kingdom of my Father.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLVIII.

Of the everlasting Day, and shortness of this Life.

O Most blessed Mansion of the heavenly City! O most clear day of Eternity, which night obscureth not, but the highest truth ever enlightneth; day ever pleasant, ever secure, and never changing into contrary state! O that that day would once appear, and all these temporal things were at an end! To the Saints it shineth glistering with everlasting brightness, but to those that are Pilgrims upon Earth, it appeareth onely afar off, and as it were through a glass.

2. The Inhabitants of Heaven do know how joyful that day is: But the banished Children of *Eve* bewail the bitterness and tediousness of this. The days of this life are short and evil, full of sorrow and anguish; where Man is defiled with many sins, incumbred with many passions, disquieted with many fears, filled with many cares, distracted with many curiosities, intangled with many vanities, compassed about with many errours, worn away with many labours, vexed with temptations, weakned with delights, tormented with want.

3. O when shall these evils be at an end! When

When shall I be delivered from the miserable bondage of Sin! When shall I think, O Lord, of thee alone! When shall I perfectly rejoyce in thee! When shall I be free from all impediments in true liberty, without all grief of Mind and Body! when shall I have firm peace, peace secure, and without trouble, peace within and without, peace every way assured! O good Jesu! when shall I stand to behold thee! When shall I contemplate the glory of thy Kingdom! When wilt thou be unto me all in all things! O when shall I be with thee in thy Kingdom, which thou hast prepared for thy beloved, from before all Worlds! I am left a poor and banished Man in the Land of Enemies, where there are daily Wars, and great misfortunes.

4. Comfort my banishment, assuage my sorrow; for my whole desire sendeth up sighs unto thee. For all is burdensome to me, whatsoever this World offereth for my comfort. I desire familiarly to enjoy thee, but I cannot attain unto it. I would gladly fix my heart to the things of Heaven, but temporal cares and unmortified passions weigh me down. In mind I would be above all things, but to my flesh I am inforced to be subject against my Will. Thus unhappy man that I am, I fight against my self, and am become grievous to my self, whilst my spirit seeketh after the things that are above, and my flesh that which is below.

5. O what do I inwardly suffer, when in mind I consider heavenly things, and presently in my Prayers a multitude of fleshly fan-

fantasies present themselves before me! My God, be not far from me, depart not in thy Wrath from thy Servant. Cast forth thy lightning, and disperse them: Send out thy darts and break all the fantasies of my Enemy. Gather my Senses together unto thee, make me forget the things of this World: Grant me grace to cast away speedily the fantasies of Vices. Succour me, O everlasting Truth, that no Vanity may move me. Come, heavenly Sweetness, and let all Impurity fly from thy face. Pardon me also, and mercifully forgive me as often as I think upon any thing else besides thee in Prayer I truly confess, that I am many times wont to be subject to many distractions; for oftentimes I am not there, where I do corporally stand, or sit, but rather there, whither my Thoughts do carry me. Where my Thoughts is, there am I: There is oftentimes my Thought, where my Affection is. That quickly occurreth unto me, which is naturally delightsome, and by custom pleasing.

6. And for this cause, thou that art Truth it self, hast plainly said, Where thy Treasure is, there is also thy Heart. If I love Heaven, I willingly think of heavenly things. If I love the World, I rejoyce at the felicity of the World, and grieve for the adversity thereof. If I love the Flesh, I imagine oftentimes those things, that are pleasing to the Flesh: If I love the Spirit, I delight to think of spiritual things. For whatsoever I love, thereof do I willingl

speak, y

speak, and hear, and carry home with me the forms and representations thereof. O blessed is that Man, that for thee, O Lord, forsaketh all Creatures; that violently resisteth Nature, and out of the fervour of spirit, crucifieth the Concupiscences of the Flesh: That with a clear Conscience he may offer sincere Prayers unto thee, and be worthy of the company of Angelical Quires, all earthly things outwardly and inwardly being excluded.

CHAP. XLIX.

Of the desire of everlasting Life, and how great Rewards are promimised to those that fight valiantly.

SOn, when thou perceivest the desire of everlasting Bliss to be given thee from above, and desirest to depart out of the Tabernacle of this Body, that thou mayst without shadow of any interchange behold my light; open thy Heart, and receive this holy Inspiration with thy whole desire. Give great thanks to the heavenly Goodness, that dealeth with thee so favourably, visiteth thee mercifully, stirreth thee up fervently, holdeth thee up powerfully, lest through thy own weight thou fall down to the Vanities of the Earth. Neither dost thou obtain this

this by thy ovvn Thought or Endeavour, but by the onely favour of heavenly Grace and divine Bounty, that thou mayst profit in Vertue, and obtain greater humility, and prepare thy self to future Battels, and endeavour to cleave unto me with the vvhole affection of thy Heart, and serve me vvith a fervent desire

2. Son, fire often burneth, but the flame ascendeth not up vvithout smoak: So likevvise the desires of some men are earnestly carried to heavenly things, and yet they are not free from Temptation of carnal Affection: And therefore it is not altogether purely for the honour of God that vvhich they so earnestly request of him. Such is also oftentimes thy desire, vvhich vvith such importunity thou presentest unto me. For that is not pure and perfect, vvhich is infected and defiled vvith the love of thy ovvn proper commodity and interest.

3. Ask not that which is delightsome and profitable to thee, but that which is grateful to me, and appertaineth to my Honour; for if thou judgest aright, thou oughtest to prefer and follow my appointment, rather than thy own desired thing: I know thy desire, and have heard thy often groans. Now thou wouldest be in the freedom of the Sons of God: Now doth the everlasting habitation, and the heavenly Country full of joy delight thee, but this hour is not yet come: It is yet another time, to wit, of War, time of Labour and Tryal. Thou desirest to be filled vvith the chiefest Good, but thou can't

canst not attain it for the present. I am he, saith our Lord, expect until the Kingdom of God doth come.

4. Thou art yet to be tried upon Earth, and to be exercised in many things. Comfort shall be sometimes given thee, but abundant fulness thereof shall not be granted. Take courage therefore, and be constant as well in doing, as in suffering things contrary to nature. Thou oughtest to put on a new Man, and to be changed into another. Thou must oftentimes do that which thou wouldest not, and leave undone what thou would'st do. That which is pleasing to others, shall go well forwards: That which thou wishest, shall not speed; that which others say, shall be nothing regarded. Others shall ask, and shall receive, thou shalt ask and not obtain.

5. Others shall be great in the praises of Men, but of thee there shall be no speech; to others this or that shall be committed, but thou shalt be accounted fit for nothing. At this Nature will sometimes repine, and it is much if thou endurest it with silence In these and such like, a faithful servant of our Lord is wont to be tryed, how he can deny and overcome himself in all things. There is scarce any thing, wherein thou hast such need to mortifie thy self, as in seeing and suffering those things that are contrary to thy Will, especially when that is commanded, which seemeth unto thee inconvenient, or to little purpose. And for that thou being placed under Authori-

ty, dareſt not reſiſt a higher power, therefore it ſeemeth hard unto thee, to walk at the beck of another, and to leave wholly thy own Opinion.

6. But conſider, Son, the fruit of theſe Labours, the end near at hand, and the reward above all meaſure, and thou ſhalt receive no grief thereby, but great comfort of thy patience. For in regard of that little of thy Will, which now thou willingly forſakeſt, thou ſhalt always have thy Will in Heaven. There thou ſhalt have all that thou wilt, or canſt deſire: There thou ſhalt enjoy all good without fear of loſing it; there ſhall thy Will be ever one with me; it ſhall deſire nothing. Strange or private; there no Man ſhall withſtand thee, no Man complain of thee, no Man hinder thee, nothing come againſt thee: But all things deſired ſhall be there together preſent, and delight thy whole deſire, and fulfill it to the higheſt degree: There I will give thee Glory for the Reproach which here thou ſuffereſt; a garment of Praiſe for former Grief; for the loweſt place, a ſeat of an everlaſting Kingdom; there ſhall the fruit of Obedience appear, the labour of Penance rejoyce, and humble Subjection ſhall be gloriouſly crowned.

7. Now therefore bow thy ſelf with great humility under the hands of all, and regard not who ſaid or commanded this; but take heed, that whether thy Superiour or thy Inferiour, or thy equal, require any thing of thee, or do inſinuate their deſire, thou take it all in good part, and endeavour

rous to fulfil it with a sincere intention. Let one seek this, another that; let him glory in this, the other in that, and be praised a thousand thousand times; but do thou neither rejoyce in this, nor in that, but in the contempt of thy self, and in my pleasure and honour alone. This art thou to wish, that whether by life or death, God may be always glorified in thee.

CHAP. L.

How a desolate person ought to offer himself into the hands of God.

LOrd God, holy Father, thy holy Name be now and for ever blessed; because as thou wilt, so is it done, and what thou doest, is good. Let thy Servant rejoyce in thee, not in himself, nor any thing else, for thou alone art the true Gladness, thou art my Joy and my Honour, O Lord. What hath thy Servant, but what he hath received from thee, even without any desire of his? Thine is all that thou hast given, and whatsoever thou hast made. I am poor, and in labours from my youth: And sometimes my Soul is heavy even unto Tears, sometimes also it is troubled in it self, by reason of passions which rise against her.

2. I desire the joy of peace, I crave the peace of the Children that are fed by thee

in the light of comfort. If thou give peace, if thou infuse holy joy, the Soul of thy Servant shall be full of heavenly sweetness, and shall become devout in thy praise. But if thou withdraw thy self, as very often thou art wont, he will not be able to run the ways of thy Commandments, but rather he boweth his knees, and knocketh his breast, for that it is not with him, as it was yesterday, and the day before, when thy light shined upon his head, and he was protected under the shadow of thy Wings, from the Temptations which violently assaulted him.

3. O Righteous Father, and ever to be praised, the hour is come, that thy Servant is to be proved! Behold, Father, it is fit that in this hour thy Servant suffer something for thee. O Father, worthy of eternal Honour! the hour is come, which from all eternity thou didst foreknow should come; that for a short time thy Servant should outwardly be oppressed, but inwardly live for ever with thee: He should be a little despised, and humbled, and made as an abject in the sight of Men, and much afflicted with passions and infirmities, that he may rise again with thee, in the rising of new light, and be clarified in Heaven. Holy Father, thou hast so appointed it, and wilt have it so; and this is fulfilled which thou thy self hast commanded.

4 It is a grace and favour to thy Friend to suffer, and to be afflicted in the World for the love of thee, how often soever, by whomsoever thou permittest it to fall upon him.

him. Without thy Counsel and Providence, and without cause nothing is done upon Earth. It is good for me, Lord, that thou hast humbled me, that I may learn thy righteous Judgments, and cast away all haughtiness of Heart and presumption. It is profitable to me, that shame hath covered my face, that I may rather seek comfort from thee, than from Men. I have learned also hereby to dread thy inscrutable Judgment, that afflictest the Just with the Wicked, but not without equity and justice.

5. I give thee thanks, that thou hast not spared my sins, but hast worn me away with bitter stripes, inflicting sorrows, and sending grief within and without. There is none under Heaven that can comfort me, but thou my Lord God, the heavenly Physician of Souls, that strikest and healest, bringest into Hell, and drawest out again: Let thy Rod instruct me.

6. Behold, behold, Father, I am in thy hands. I bow my self under the Rod of thy Correction: Let my neck and shoulders feel the stripes of thy Chastisement, that my crookedness may be conformed to thy Will. Make me a devout and humble Disciple of thine, as thou art wont well to do, that I may be ready at every beck of thy divine Pleasure. I commend my self, and all mine, unto thee to be corrected. It is better to be rebuked here, than hereafter. Thou knowest all and every thing, and there is nothing hidden in the Conscience of Man, which can be hidden from thee. Before things are done thou knowest

they will happen, and haſt no need that any ſhould teach thee,, or admoniſh thee of thoſe things which are done on Earth. Thou knoweſt what is expedient for my good, and how much Tribulation is fit for purging the ruſt of my Sins. Do with me according to thy deſired pleaſure, and deſpiſe not my ſinful Life, better and more clearly known to none, than to thee alone.

7. Grant me, O Lord, to know that which is to be known, to love that which is to be beloved, to praiſe that which pleaſeth thee moſt: To eſteem that which is precious unto thee, to deſpiſe that which is contemtible in thy ſight: Suffer me not to judge according to the ſight of the exterior eyes, nor to give ſentence according to the hearing of the ears of ignorant Men; but to determine of viſible and ſpiritual things with a true Judgment, and above all things ever to ſearch after thy Will and Pleaſure.

8. The Senſes of Men are often deceived in their Judgments; the Lovers of the World are alſo deceived in loving onely viſible things. What is a Man the better, for that he is eſteemed great by Man? The deceitful Man deceiveth the deceitful, the vain the vain, the blind deceiveth the blind, and one feeble likewiſe another, whilſt he exalteth and praiſeth him For how much every one is in thy ſight, ſo much he is, and no more, ſaith humble St. *Francis*.

CHAP.

CHAP. LI.

That a Man ought to imploy himself in Works of Humility, when force is wanting for higher Exercises.

SOn, thou art not able always to continue in the fervent desire of Vertue, nor to persist in the high pitch of Contemplation; but thou must sometimes of necessity, by reason of original Corruption, descend to inferiour things, and bear the burden of this corruptible life even against thy Will, and with irksomness. As thou carriest a mortal Body, thou shalt feel trouble and heaviness of Heart. Thou ought-est therefore in Flesh oftentimes to bewail the burden of Flesh; for that thou canst not always persevere in spiritual Exercises, and divine Contemplation.

2. It is then expedient for thee to fly to humble and exteriour Works, and to refresh thy self with good vertuous Actions, to expect with a firm confidence my coming, and heavenly visitation, to bear patiently thy banishment, and the drines of thy mind, till thou be visited again by me, and delivered from all anxiety: For I will make thee forget thy former pains, and enjoy inward quietness. I will lay open before thee the pleasant fields of holy Scripture, that with an enlarged Heart thou mayst begin

to run the way of my Commandments. And thou shalt say, that the sufferings of this time are not condign to the Glory to come, that shall be revealed in us.

CHAP. LII.

That a Man ought to esteem himself unworthy of comfort, and to have deserved stripes.

LOrd, I am not worthy of thy comfort, nor of any spiritual visitation, and therefore thou dealest justly with me, when thou leavest me poor and desolate. For if I could shed Tears like a Sea, yet I were not worthy of thy comfort. For (alas) I deserve nothing, but to be scourged and punished, in that I have grievously and often offended thee, and sinned in many things. All things therefore duly considered, I am not worthy even of the least comfort. But thou, mild and merciful God, who wilt not that thy Works do perish, to shew the Riches of thy Goodness in the Vessels of Mercy, even beyond his desert, vouchsafest to comfort thy Servant above humane measure. For thy Comforts are not like to the vain Words of Men.

2. What have I done, O Lord, that thou shouldst impart any heavenly Comfort unto me? I remember not that I have ever done

done any good, but have been always prone to sin, and slothful in my amendment. It is true, and I cannot deny it. If I should say otherwise, thou wouldst stand against me, and there would be none to defend me. What have I deserved for my sins, but Hell and everlasting Fire? I confess in the truth of my Heart, that I am worthy of all scorn and contempt, and it is unfit that I should be remembred amongst thy devout Servants. And although I be unwilling to hear this, yet notwithstanding for the love of Truth, I will lay open my sins against my self, that I may the better deserve to obtain thy mercy.

3. What shall I say being guilty, and full of confusion? I can utter out of my Mouth, no other Word, but this: I have sinned, Lord, I have sinned, have mercy on me; pardon me, suffer me a little, that I may bewail my grief, before I go unto the Land of Darkness, and be covered with the shadow of Death. What dost thou require of a guilty and miserable sinner, but that he be contrite and sorrowful, and to humble himself for his Offences? In true contrition and humbleness of heart, is bred a hope of forgiveness; a troubled Conscience is reconciled again, Grace lost is restored, Man is defended from future wrath, and God and the penitent Soul meet together in the holy kiss of peace.

4. Humble contrition for sins is an acceptable Sacrifice unto thee, O Lord, savouring much sweeter in thy sight than

burning Frankincense. This is also the pleasant Oyntment, which thou wouldest have poured upon thy sacred Feet: For thou never despisest a contrite and humble Heart. There is a place of refuge from the face of the Wrath of our enemy: there is amended, and washed away whatsoever uncleanness hath been elsewhere gathered, and whatsoever is defiled.

CHAP. LIII.

That the Grace of God is not given to those that savour of earthly things.

SOn, my Grace is precious, it suffereth not it self to be mingled with external things, nor earthly Comforts. Thou oughtest therefore to cast away all hindrances of Grace, if thou desire to receive the infusion thereof. Choose therefore a secret place to thy self, love to live alone with thy self, desire the conversation of none; but rather pour out devout Prayers unto God, that thou mayst keep thy mind compunct, and thy Conscience pure. Esteem the whole World as nothing, prefer my Service before all outward things; for thou canst not attend unto me, and be delighted also in transitory Vanities. Thou oughtest to sequester thy self from thy acquaintance and friends, and to keep thy mind deprived of all temporal Comfort,

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So the blessed Apostle *Peter* required, that the faithful of Christ should keep themselves as Strangers and Pilgrims in this World.

2. O how great a confidence shall he have at the hour of death, whom no affection to any earthly thing detaineth in the World. But the weak Mind is not yet capable of so retired a Heart; neither doth the fleshly person understand the freedom of a recollected Mind. Notwithstanding if he will be truely spiritual, he ought to renounce as well that which is far off, as that which is neatest unto him, and to beware of no Man more than of himself. If thou perfectly overcome thy self, thou shalt with more ease subdue the rest. It is a glorious Victory to triumph over our selves: For he that keepeth himself subject in such sort, that his sensuality be subdued to reason, and reason in all things be obedient to me, he is truly a Conquerour of himself, and the Lord of the World.

3. If thou desire to mount unto this height of perfection, thou must begin manfully, and set the Axe to the root, that thou mayst pluck up and destroy thy hidden and inordinate inclination to thy self, and unto all private and earthly Good. Of this Vice (that Man too inordinately loveth himself) almost all dependeth, whatsoever is wholly to be overcome; which being once overcome and subdued, there will presently ensue great peace and tranquility. But for that few endeavour perfectly to die unto themselves, and to forsake

sake themselves wholly, therefore they remain entangled in themselves, and cannot be lifted up in spirit above themselves; but he, that desireth to walk freely with me, it is necessary that he mortifie all his inordinate Affections, and not adhere to any Creature by private love.

CHAP. LIV.

Of the different motions of Nature, and Grace.

SOn, mark diligently the motions of thy own Nature and my Grace, for in very contrary and secret manner these are moved, and can hardly be discerned but by him that is spiritual and inwardly enlightned. All Men desire that which is good, and pretend some good in all their Words and Deeds; and therefore under pretence of Good, many are deceived. Nature is deceitful and seduceth, intangleth, and deceiveth many, and always proposeth herself for her end; but Grace walketh with great sincerity, and avoideth all shew of evil, pretendeth not deceits, and doth all things purely for God, in whom also she finally resteth.

2. Nature will not willingly die, nor be kept in, nor overcome, nor be subject to any, nor be subdued: But Grace laboureth for self-mortification, resisteth sensuality,

seeketh to be subject, is willing to be overcome, and will not use her own liberty: She loveth to be kept under Discipline, and desireth not to rule any, but always to live and remain wholly subject unto God, and for God is ready humbly to bow unto all Men. Nature striveth for her own Commodity, and considereth what profit she may reap by another: But Grace considereth not what is profitable and commodious unto herself, but rather what is profitable to many. Nature willingly receiveth honour and reverence; but Grace faithfully attributeth all Honour and Glory unto God.

3. Nature feareth shame and contempt, but Grace rejoyceth to suffer reproach for the Name of Jesus. Nature loveth idleness, and bodily rest, but Grace cannot be idle, but willingly embraceth labour. Nature seeketh to have those things that are curious and precious, abhorreth that which is mean and base: But Grace delighteth in plain and humble things, despiseth not course and mean, nor refuseth to wear that which is old and torn. Nature respecteth the things of this World, rejoyceth at earthly gain, sorroweth for loss, is moved with every little injurious word; But Grace thinketh on that which is everlasting, and cleaves not to that which fadeth with time; she is not troubled with loss, nor exasperated with injuries, for that she hath placed her treasure and joy in Heaven, where nothing perisheth.

4. Na-

4. Nature is covetous and doth more willingly receive than give; she loveth proper and private things: But Grace is pitiful and liberal to all; avoideth singularity, is content with a little, thinketh it happier to give, than to receive. Nature inclineth to Creatures, yieldeth to her own Flesh, followeth Vanities, and listeneth to Discourses: But Grace draweth unto God, and seeketh after Vertues, renounceth Creatures, flieth the World, hateth desires of the Flesh, restraineth wandring abroad, blusheth to be seen in publick. Nature is willing to have some outward comfort, wherein she may delight her senses: But Grace seeketh comfort in God alone, and delighteth above all visible things in the highest good.

5. Nature worketh all for her own gain and profit, she can do nothing freely, but for bestowed benefits: She hopeth to obtain either that which is equal, or better, either praise or favour, and coveteth to have her works and gifts much esteemed: But Grace seeketh no temporal things nor asketh any other reward for her deserts than God alone, nor desireth more of temporal necessities, than what may serve her for the obtaining of everlasting Glory.

6. Nature rejoyceth to have many friends and kinsfolks, she glorieth of noble birth and descent, pleaseth the powerful, fawneth upon the rich, applaudeth those that are like herself: But Grace loveth her Enemies, and is not puffed up with multitude of Friends, nor esteemeth Place or Birth, but where

where it is joyned with greater Vertue; she rather favoureth the poor than the rich, hath more compassion of the innocent than the powerful, rejoyceth in the simple, and respecteth not the deceitful, exhorteth ever the good to labour for the better gifts, and by Vertue to resemble the Son of God. Nature quickly complaineth of any want and trouble: Grace constantly suffereth all kind of need.

7. Nature turneth all things to herself, striveth and contendeth for herself: But Grace reduceth all to God, from whence originally they proceed: She ascribeth no good to herself, neither doth she arrogantly presume of herself: She contendeth not, nor preferreth her Opinion before others, but in every sense and understanding submitteth herself unto the eternal Wisdom, and to the divine Judgment. Nature coveteth to know secrets and to hear news, she will appear abroad, and make proof of many things by the experience of her own senses; she desireth to be known, and to do those things, for which she may be praised and admired: But Grace careth not for hearing news, nor to understand curious matters, for that all this springeth from the ancient disorder of our corrupt Nature, seeing nothing that is new, is durable upon Earth. She teacheth therefore to restrain the senses, to avoid vain-pleasing and ostentation, humbly to hide those things that are worthy of praise and admiration, and of every thing and every knowledge to seek profitable fruit, and the praise and honour

nour of God: She will not have herself nor hers publickly praised, but desireth that God should be blessed in his Gifts, who of meer charity bestoweth all things.

8. This grace is a supernatural light, and a certain special gift of God, and the proper mark of the elect, and pledge of everlasting Salvation, which lifts up a Man from earthly baseness to love heavenly things, and of a carnal maketh him a spiritual person. How much the more therefore Nature is depressed and subdued, so much the greater Grace is infused, and the inward Man daily by new visitations more perfected, according to the Image of God.

CHAP. LV.

Of the corruption of Nature, and efficacy of Divine Grace.

MY God, who of thy meer Goodness hast created me to thy image and likeness, grant me this Grace which thou hast shewed to be so great, and so necessary to Salvation, that I may overcome my wicked nature, which draweth me to sin, and to the loss of my Soul. For I feel in my Flesh the law of sin, contradicting the law of my mind, and leading me Captive to obey sensuality in many things: Neither can I resist the passions thereof, unless thy Holy Grace fervently infused into my Heart, do assist me. 2. Thy

2. Thy Grace, O Lord, and great Grace is needful, that Nature may be overcome, which is ever prone to evil from her youth. For by *Adam* the first Man, it falling and being corrupted by sin, the penalty of this stain hath descended upon all Mankind, in such sort, that Nature it self, which by thee was created Good, and without defect, is now accounted for Vice, and for the infirmity of a corrupted Nature, for that the motion thereof left unto it self, draweth to evil and abject things. For the little force which remaineth, is like a certain spark, lying hidden in ashes. This is natural reason it self, compassed about with great darkness, still retaining power to discern good and evil, and the distance between true and false, although it be unable to fulfil all that it approveth, and enjoyeth not now the full light of truth, nor the former integrity of her Affections.

3. Hence it is, my God, that according to my inward Man I delight in the Law, knowing thy Commandments to be good, just, and holy; reproving also all evil and sin, and do know that it is to be fled. But in my Flesh I serve the Law of Sin, whilst I rather obey Sensuality than Reason. Hence it is, that I have a Will to do good, but know not how to perform it. For this cause I often purpose many good things, but for that I want grace to help my infirmity, for a light resistance I go back and faint. I know the way of perfection, and see clearly enough what I ought to do, but pressed with the weight of my own corruption, I rise not unto it.

4. O Lord, how needful is thy Grace for me, to begin any good Work, to go forward, and to accomplish it. For without it I can do nothing, but in thee I can do all things, when thy Grace doth comfort me. O heavenly Grace! without which our own Merits are nothing, and no Gifts of Nature are to be esteemed. Arts, Riches, Beauty, and Strength, Wit, or Eloquence are of no worth with thee, O Lord, without thy Grace. For Gifts of Nature are common to good and evil, but the peculiar Gift of the elect is Grace and Love, wherewith being marked, they are esteemed worthy of everlasting life. This Grace so much excelleth, that neither the gift of Prophecy, nor the working of Miracles, nor any speculation how high soever, is of any esteem without it. Neither Faith nor Hope, nor other Virtues are acceptable unto thee, without Charity and Grace.

4. O most blessed Grace, that maketh the poor in spirit rich with Vertues, and the rich in many blessings, humble in heart, come down unto me, replenish me in the morning with thy comfort, lest my Soul should faint with weariness, and wither away with drines of mind. I beseech thee, Lord, that I may find grace in thy sight, for thy Grace sufficeth, though other things that Nature desireth be wanting. If I be tempted and vexed with many Tribulations, I will not fear evils whilst thy grace is with me: She is my strength, she giveth advice and help, she is stronger than all enemies, and wiser than all the wise.

6. Thy

6. Thy Grace is the Mistress of Truth, the Teacher of Discipline, the Light of thy Heart, the Solace in Affliction: She driveth away sorrow, she expelleth fear, she is the Nurse of Devotion, the bringer forth of Tears. What am I without it, but a rotten piece of Wood, and an unprofitable stalk onely fit for the fire? Let thy Grace therefore, Lord, alwayes prevent me, and follow me, and make me ever diligent in good Works, through Jesus Christ thy Son. *Amen.*

CHAP. LVI.

That we ought to deny our selves, and imitate Christ, by the Cross.

Son, look how much thou canst go out of thy self, so much mayst thou enter into me. As to be void of all desire of external things, maketh inward peace; so the forsaking of our selves joyneth us internally to God. I will have thee learn the perfect leaving of thy self unto my will, without contradiction and complaint. Follow me. I am the way, the truth, and the life. Without the way there is no knowledge, without life there is no living. I am the way which thou oughtest to follow, the truth which thou oughtest to trust, the life for which thou oughtest to hope. I am the way which cannot lead amiss, the truth which

which cannot err, the life which cannot end. I am a most strait way, a supreme truth, a true life, a blessed life, an increated life. If thou remain in me, thou shalt know the truth, and the truth shall deliver thee, and thou shalt apprehend everlasting life.

2. If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments: If thou wilt know the truth believe me. If thou wilt be perfect, sell all. If thou wilt be my Disciple, deny thy self. If thou wilt possess a blessed life, despise this present life. If thou wilt be exalted in Heaven, humble thy self upon Earth. If thou wilt reign with me, bear the Cross with me. For only the servants of the Cross find the way of bliss and true light.

3. Lord Jesus, forasmuch as thy way is narrow, strict and contemptible unto the World, grant me Grace to imitate thee in suffering willingly all Wordly contempt: For the Servant is not greater than his Lord, nor the Disciple above his Master. Let thy Servant be exercised in thy holy Life, for there is the health and the true sanctity of my Soul: Whatsoever I read or hear besides, doth not recreate or delight me fully.

4. Son, now that thou knowest and hast read these things, happy shalt thou be, if thou fulfil them. He that hath my Commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and I will love him, and will manifest my self unto him, and will make him sit with me in the Kingdom of my Father. Lord Jesus, as thou hast said and

and promised, so give me grace to deserve, that it be fulfilled. I have received the Cross, I have received it from thy hand, and I will bear it, and bear it till death, as thou hast laid it upon me. Truly the life of a good religious person is the Cross; and it is a sure guide to Heaven. It is now begun, it is not lawful to go back, neither is it fit to leave that which I have undertaken.

5. Let us then take courage, my Brethren, and go forwards together. Jesus will be with us; for Jesus sake we have undertaken this Cross; for the love of Jesus let us persevere in the Cross. He will be our helper, who is our guide and forerunner. Behold our King goeth before us, who also will fight for us: Let us follow him cheerfully, let us not be dismayed, but be ready to die with courage in the Battel, and let us not blemish our glory by flying from the Cross.

CHAP. LVII.

That a Man should not be too much dejected, when he falleth into some defects.

SOn, Patience and Humility in time of Adversity, are more pleasing to me, than much Comfort and Devotion in Prosperity. Why art thou grieved for e-

very

very little trifle spoken and done against thee? Although it had been much more, thou oughtest not to have been moved. But now let it pass, it is not the first that hath happened, nor any new thing, neither shall it be the last, if thou live long. Thou art cheerful enough, as long as no adversity occurreth. Thou canst give good Counsel also, and canst strengthen others with thy words, but when any Tribulation suddenly knocketh at thy door, thou art destitute of Counsel, and void of force. See therefore thy great frailty, which thou often provest in every small occasion. It is notwithstanding permitted for thy good, when these and such-like occasions befal thee.

2. Put it out of thy Heart the best thou canst, and if it touch thee, yet let it not deject thee, nor trouble thee long; bear it at least patiently, if thou canst not joyfully. Although thou be unwilling to hear it, and feelest in thy Heart some motion of disdain, yet repress thy self, and suffer no inordinate Word to pass out of thy mouth, which may be a scandal to the Weak. The storm which now is raised, shall quickly be appeased, and inward grief shall be assuaged by the return of Grace. I do yet live, saith our Lord, and am ready to help thee, and to give thee greater comfort than before, if thou put thy trust in me, and callest devoutly upon me

3. Be more patient, and prepare thy self to greater suffering. All is not lost, if thou feel thy self often afflicted, or grievously tempted. Thou art a Man, and not God; thou

thou are Flesh, not an Angel. How canst thou look to continue ever in the same state of Vertue, when an Angel in Heaven hath fallen, and the first Man in Paradise lost his standing? I am he that do give healthful comfort to them that mourn, and do raise up unto my Godhead those that know their own frailty.

4. Lord, blessed be thy sacred Word, more sweet unto my mouth then the hony, and the hony-comb. What should I do in these my so great tribulations and anguish, unless thou didst comfort me with thy holy, sweet, and heavenly speeches? What matter is it, how much, and what I suffer, so as I may at length attain to the Heaven of bliss? Grant me a good end, grant me a happy passage out of this world. Be mindful of me, my God. and direct me the strait and ready way to thy everlasting Kingdom. *Amen.*

CHAP. LVIII.

Of not searching into high matters, and into the secret Judgements of God.

SOn, beware thou dispute not of high matters nor of the secret Judgements of God, why this man is forsaken, and he assumed to so great grace; Why also this man

man so much afflicted, and he so greatly advanced. These things exceed all humane power, neither can any reason or discourse of any man search out the Judgement of God. When the the enemy therefore suggesteth these things unto thee, or some envious people demand them of thee, answer that of the Prophet: Thou art just, O Lord, and thy judgement is right. And again: The judgements of our Lord are true and justified in themselves. My judgements are to be feared, not to be discussed, for they are such as cannot be comprehended by the understanding of man.

2. In like manner I advise thee not to inquire, nor dispute of the merits of the Saints, which of them is holier than the other, and which is greater in the Kingdom of Heaven. These things oftentimes breed strife and unprofitable contentions: They nourish also Pride and vain Glory, from whence do usually spring envy and dissentions, whilst one will needs foolishly have this Saint preferred, and the other, another. To desire to know and search out such things, is to no purpose, but to displease the Saints, of whom they speak. For I am not the God of dissention, but of peace which peace consisteth rather in true humility, than in exalting our selves.

3. Some are carried with zeal of affection, to love these, or those most: But this love is rather humane than divine. I have made all the Saints, and have given them grace: I have made them partakers of my glory

glory. I know the merits of every one, I have prevented them in the benedictions of my sweetness. I foreknew my Beloved before the beginning of the World. I chose them out of the World, they chose not me first. I called them by grace, I drew them by mercy, I led them through sundry temptations. I have sent them great inward comforts, I have given them perseverance, I have crowned their patiences.

4. I know the first and the last: I embrace all with inestimable love. I am to be praised in all my Saints: I am to be blessed above all things, and to be honoured in every one, whom I have thus gloriously exalted, and predestinated without any precedent merits of their own. He therefore that contemneth one of the least of my Saints, honoureth not the greatest; for that I made both the less & the greater. And he that dispraiseth any of my Saints, dispraiseth also me, and all the rest in the Kingdom of Heaven. All are one by the band of Charity; they think the same, they will the same, and are all knit together in one perfect band of love.

5. But yet (which is much more high) they love me more than themselves, and more than their own merits. For being ravished above themselves, & drawn out of the affection of themselves, they tend wholly unto the love of me, in which also they rest, enjoying me with unspeakable glory. Nothing can put them back, nothing press them down; for being full of everlasting truth, they burn with the fire of unquenchable charity. Let

therefore carnal and earthly men, that can affect no other but private joyes, forbear to dispute of the state of Saints. They add and take away according to their own fancies, not as it pleaseth the everlasting truth.

6. There is in many, great ignorance, especially in those that be slenderly inlightned, and these can seldom love any with perfect spiritual love. They are alwayes much drawn by a natural affection, and humane friendship to this man or to that, and according to the experience they have of themselves in their earthly affections, so they frame an imagination of heavenly things. But there is an incomparable distance between the things, which the imperfect frame in their conceits, and those which illuminated persons do see by revelation from above.

7. Beware therefore, my Son, that thou treat not curiously of these things, which exceed thy knowledge, but rather so apply thy endeavours, that thou maist at least have the meanest place in the Kingdom of Heaven. And if any one did know which of the Saints exceedeth others in sanctity, or is esteemed great in the Kingdom of Heaven, what would this knowledge avail him, unless he should thereby humble himself the more in my sight, and stir up his mind to praise my name with greatest fervour. His labour is much more acceptable unto God, that thinketh of the greatness of his sins, and his want of vertues, and how far off he is from the perfection of the Saints; than he that disputeth of their great-

greatneſs. It is better to pray to the Saints with devotion and tears, and to crave their glorious ſuffrages with a humble mind, than to ſearch their ſecrets with vain curioſity.

8. They are well, and right well contented, if men could content themſelves and refrain from theſe vain diſcourſes. They glory not of their own merits; for they aſcribe no good unto themſelves, but attribute all to me, who of my infinite charity have beſtowed my bleſſings upon them. They are repleniſhed with ſo great love of my God head, and ſo ſuperabunjoy, that there is no glory nor happineſs, that is, or can be wanting unto them. All the Saints how much the higher they be in glory, ſo much the more humble they are in themſelves, and nearer unto me. And therefore thou haſt it written, That they did caſt their Crowns before God and fell down upon their face before the Lamb, and adored him that liveth for ever.

9. Many inquire who is greateſt in the Kingdom of God; that know not whether they ſhall ever be numbred there amongſt the leaſt. It is no ſmall matter to be even the leaſt in Heaven, where all are great: for that all there ſhall be called, and ſhall be indeed the Sons of God. The leaſt there ſhall be great among thouſands, and the ſinner of a hundred years ſhall die. For when the Diſciples asked who was the greater in the Kingdom of Heaven, they received this anſwer: Unleſs you be converted, and become as little children, you ſhall not enter into the Kingdom of Hea-

ven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, he is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven.

10. Wo be unto them that disdain to humble themselves willingly with little Children. For the low gate of the Kingdom of heaven will not give them entrance. And wo be to the rich, that have their comforts here, for whilst the poor enter into the Kingdom of God, they shall be wanting without. Rejoyce you that be humble: and you that be poor be you glad, for yours is the Kingdom of God, if you walk according unto truth.

CHAP. LIX.

That all our hope and trust is to be fixed in God alone.

LOrd, what trust have I in this world? Or what is the the greatest comfort, that all things under Heaven do yield me? Is it not thou, my Lord God, whose mercies are without number? Where hath it been well with me without thee? Or when could it be ill with me, when thou wert present? I had rather be poor for thee than rich without thee. I rather choose to be a Pilgrim on Earth with thee, than to possess Heaven without thee. Where thou art, there is Heaven: and there is Death and Hell, where thou art not. Thou art my desire, and therefore it behoveth me to send

send forth deep sighs from my heart, and cry and pray unto thee. For I have none to trust unto, nor one that can help me in time of necessity, but thee alone, my God. Thou art my hope, and my trust; thou art my comforter, and most faithful unto me in all my distresses.

2. All men seek their own gain, thou only seekest my salvation and my profit, and turnest all things to my good. Although thou permitest many temptations to assault me, and many adversities to befal me, yet thou ordainest all this to my good and profit, who art wont to prove thy beloved servants a thousand wayes. In which proof thou oughtest no less to be loved and praised, than if thou didst replenish me with heavenly comforts.

3. In thee therefore, my Lord God, I put my whole hope and refuge: In thee I place my tribulation and anguish, for I find all to be weak and unconstant, whatsoever I behold out of thee. For neither can many friends avail, nor forcible helpers aid, nor wise counsellors give profitable answer, nor the books of the learned comfort, nor any wealth deliver, nor any secrets, or pleasant place defend, if thou thy self doest not assist help, comfort, instruct, and keep us.

4. For all things that seem to be ordained for the rest and solace of man, when thou art absent, are nothing, and do bring indeed no joy, nor comfort at all. Thou therefore art the end of all that is good, the light of life, the depth of wisdom: And the most forcible comfort of thy servants,

is to trust in thee above all things. To thee therefore do I lift up my eyes: In thee my God, the Father of mercies, I put my whole trust. Bless and sanctify my soul with thy heavenly blessings, that it may be made thy holy habitation, and the seat of thy eternal glory: And that nothing may be found in the Temple of thy greatness, that may offend the eyes of thy Majesty. According to the greatness of thy goodness, and multitude of thy mercies, take pity upon me, and hear the Prayer of thy poor servant, who is far exiled from thee in the Land of the shadow of Death. Protect, and keep the soul of thy Servant, amidst so many dangers of this corruptible life, and by the assistance of thy grace, direct it in the way of peace, to the Country of everlasting light. *Amen.*

THE

THE FOURTH BOOK.

A devout exhortation unto Holy Communion.

The Voice of Christ.

COme unto me all ye that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you, saith our Lord. The Bread which I will give, is my Flesh, for the life of the World. Take ye and eat, this is my Body that shall be delivered for you. Do this for the Commemoration of me. He that eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood, remaineth in me, and I in him. The Words which I have spoken unto you are Spirit and Life.

CHAP. I.

With how great reverence Christ ought to be received.

THese are thy Words, O Christ, ever-ver lasting Truth, though not spoken all at one time, nor written in one and the self-same place. Because therefore they are thine, and true, they are all thankfully and faithfully to be received by me. They are thine, and thou hast spoken them; and they are mine also, because thou hast spoken them for my Salvation. I willingly receive them from thy mouth, that they may be the deeper imprinted in my heart. These devout words so full of sweetness and love, do stir me up, but my own Offences do amaze me, and my impure Conscience driveth me back from the receiving so great Mysteries. The sweetness of thy Words doth encourage me, but the multitude of my Sins do oppress me.

2. Thou commandest me to come confidently unto thee, if I will have part with thee: And to receive the Food of Immortality, if I desire to obtain everlasting Life and Glory. Come, sayst thou unto me, all ye that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you. O sweet and lovely word in the ear of a sinner, that thou, my Lord God, shouldest invite the poor and needy

to

to receive thy most blessed Body. But who am I, Lord, that I presume to approach unto thee? Behold the Heavens cannot contain thee, and thou sayst, Come ye all unto me

3. What meaneth this most pious benignity, and so loving invitation? How shall I dare to come that know not any good in me, whereupon I may presume? How shall I bring thee into my House, that have often offended thy most gracious Countenance? The Angels and the Archangels honour thee, the Saints and just Men do fear thee; and thou sayst, Come ye all unto me. Unless thou, O Lord, didst say it, who would believe it to be true? And unless thou didst command it, who would dare to come unto thee? Behold *Noah* a just Man, labouted a hundred years in the building of the Ark, that he might be saved with a few: And how can I in one hours space prepare my self to receive with reverence the Maker of the World?

4. *Moses* thy great Servant and especial Friend, made and Ark of incorruptible Wood, which also he covered with most pure Gold, to put the Tables of the Law therein: and I a rotten Creature, how shall I so lightly dare to receive the Maker of the Law, and the Giver of Life? *Solomon* the wisest of the Kings of *Israël*, bestowed seven years in building a magnificent Temple, in praise of thy Name, and celebrated the Feast of the Dedication thereof eight days together: He offered a thousand peaceable Sacrifices, and set the Ark

in the place prepared for it, with the sound of Trumpets, and of Joy; and I the most unhappy and poorest of Men, how shall I bring thee into my House, that can scarce spend one half hour devoutly? I would to God it were once almost one half hour, in worthy and due manner!

5. O my God, how much did they endeavour to please thee, and alas how little is that which I do! how short time do I spend, when I prepare my self to receive! I am seldom wholly recollected, very seldom altogether free from distraction; and yet surely no undecent thought should occur in the presence of thy Deity, nor yet any Creature draw me unto it; for I am not to harbour an Angel, but the Lord of Angels.

6. And yet there is great difference between the Ark and the Reliques thereof, and thy most pure Body with its unspeakable Virtues: Between those legal Sacrifices, figures of future things, and the true Sacrifice of thy Body, the Complement of all ancient Sacrifices. Why therefore do I not become more fervent in thy venerable Presence? Wherefore do I not prepare my self with greater care to receive thy sacred Gift, since those holy ancient Patriarchs and Prophets, yea Kings also and Princes, with the whole People have shewed so great zeal of Devotion to thy divine Service.

7. The most devout King *David* danced before the Ark of God with all his force, calling to mind the benefits bestowed in times

times paſt upon his Forefathers. He made Inſtruments of ſundry kinds, he publiſhed Pſalms, and appointed them to be Sung with joy; himſelf alſo oftentimes playing upon the Harp. Being inſpired with the Grace of the Holy Ghoſt, he taught the People of *Iſrael* to praiſe God with their whole Heart, and with pleaſant Voices every day to bleſs and praiſe him. If ſo great Devotion was then uſed, and ſuch memory of divine Praiſe before the Ark of the Teſtament, what reverence and devotion is now to be performed by me, and all Chriſtian People in the preſence of this Sacrament, in receiving the moſt precious Body of Chriſt?

8. Many go to ſundry places to viſit the Reliques of Saints, and are aſtoniſhed when they hear of their miraculous Works: They behold the ſpacious buildings of their Churches, and kiſs their ſacred Bones wrapt in Silk and Gold. And behold thou art here preſent with me on the Altar, my God, the Holy of Holies, the Maker of all things, and Lord of Angels. Oftentimes in thoſe Devotions there is but curioſity of Men, and novelty of the Beholders in the ſeeing of ſuch ſights, and little fruit of amendment is gotten thereby, eſpecially where there is ſo unconſtant wandring without true and real contrition. But here in the Sacrament of the Altar, thou art preſent, my Lord, God and Man, Chriſt Jeſus, where alſo plentiful fruit of everlaſting Salvation is obtained, as often as thou art worthily and devoutly received. No levity, no curioſity,

riosity, or sensuality, draweth unto this, but firm Faith, devout Hope, and sincere Charity.

9. O God! the invisible Creator of the World, how wonderfully dost thou deal with us! How sweetly and graciously dost thou dispose of all things with thy elect, to whom thou offerest thy self to be received in the Sacrament! O this exceedeth all understanding of Man! This chiefly draweth the hearts of the devout, and inflameth their desire. For thy true faithful Servants, that dispose their whole Life to amendment, by this most worthy Sacrament, oftentimes receive great grace of Devotion and love of Vertue.

10. O admirable and hidden Grace of this Sacrament, which onely the faithful of Christ do know: But the unfaithful, and such as are slaves unto sin, cannot conceive nor feel. In this Sacrament, spiritual Grace is given, and lost Vertue is restored in the Soul: And Beauty disfigured by sin, returneth again. This Grace is sometimes so great, that with the fulness of Devotion, which is here given, not onely the mind, but the weak Body also feeleth great increase of strength.

11. Our coldness and negligence surely is much to be bewailed and pitied, that we are not drawn with greater Affection to receive Christ, in whom all the hope and merit of those that are to be saved doth consist. For he is our Sanctification and Redemption; he is the Comfort of Passengers, and the everlasting fruition of Saints.

Saints. It is much therefore to be lamented, that many do so little consider this comfortable Mystery, which rejoyceth Heaven, and preserveth the whole World. O blindness and hardness of mans heart, that doth not more deeply weigh the greatness of so unspeakable a gift, but rather comes by the daily use thereof, to regard it little or nothing.

12 For if this most Holy Sacrament should be celebrated in one place only, and consecrated by one only Priest in the World, with how great desire dost thou think would men be affected to that place, and what esteem would they have of such a Priest of Almighty God, by whom they might enjoy the consolation of these divine mysteries? But now there are many Priests, and Christ is offered up in many places, that so the grace and love of God to man may appear so much greater, how much the more this sacred Communion is common through the World. Thanks be unto thee, good Jesus, everlasting Pastour of our souls, that hast vouchafed to refresh us poor & banished men, with thy precious Body & Blood to invite us to the receiving of these Mysteries with the words of thy own mouth, saying; Come unto me all ye that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

That great goodness and charity of God is bestowed upon man in this Sacrament.

The voice of the Disciple.

PResuming of thy goodness and great mercy, O Lord, being sick, I approach unto my Saviour, hungry and thirsty to the fountain of Life, needy to the King of Heaven, a servant unto my Lord, a creature to my Creator, desolate to my merciful comforter. But whence is this to me that thou vouchafest to come unto me? Who am I that thou shouldest give thy self unto me? How dare a sinner presume to appear before thee? And thou, how dost thou vouchsafe to come unto a sinner? Thou knowest thy servant, and seest that he hath no good thing in him, for which thou shouldest bestow this benefit upon him. I confess therefore my unworthiness and I acknowledge thy goodness; I praise thy mercy, and give thee thanks for this thy unspeakable charity. For thou dost this for thy own goodness, not for any merits of mine, to the end that thy goodness may be better known unto me, thy charity more abundantly shewed, and thy humility more highly commended. Since therefore it is thy

thy pleasure, and thou hast commanded that it should be so, this thy bounty is also pleasing to me, and I do wish that my offences may be no hindrance.

2. O most sweet and bountiful Jesu, how great reverence and thanks, with perpetual praise is due unto thee for the receiving of thy sacred Body, whose worth and dignity no man is able to express! But what shall I think of at this time, now that I am to receive this divine Sacrament, and to approach unto my Lord, to whom I am not able to give due reverence, and yet I desire to receive him devoutly? What can I think better, and more profitable, than to humble my self wholly before thee, and to exalt thy infinite goodness above me? I praise thee my God, and will exalt thee for ever: And I do despise, and submit my self unto thee, even into the depth of my unworthiness.

3. Behold thou art the Holy of Holies, and I the skum of sinners! Behold thou bowest thy self down unto me, who am not worthy so much as to look up unto thee. Behold thou comest unto me! It is thy will to be with me, thou invitest me to thy banquet. Thou wilt give me the food of Heaven, and Bread of Angels to eat, which is no other truly than thy self, the lively Bread, that descendest from Heaven, and giwest life unto the World.

4. Behold from whence this love proceedeth! What kind of favour and benignity is this which shineth upon us! What thanks and praises are due unto thee for

these

these benefits. O How good and profitable was thy counsel, when thou ordaindst it! How sweet and pleasant the banquet when thou gavest thy self to be our food! How wonderful thy work O Lord, how powerful thy vertue, how unspeakable thy truth! For thou saidst the word, and all things were made; and this was done which thou commandest.

5. A thing of great admiration, and worthy of faith, and surpassing the understanding of man, that thou, my Lord God, true God and Man, shouldest be whole contained under a small form of Bread and Wine, and shouldest be eaten by the receiver without being consumed. Thou, who art the Lord of all things, and standest in need of none, hast pleased to dwell in us by means of this thy Sacrament. Preserve my heart and body unspotted, that that with a cheerful and pure conscience I may often celebrate thy Mysteries, and receive them to my everlasting health, which thou hast chiefly ordained and instituted for thy honour, and perpetual memory.

Rejoice my soul, and give thanks unto God for so noble a gift, and singular comfort left unto thee in this vale of tears. For as often as thou calleſt to mind this mystery, and receivest the Body of Christ; so often dost thou work the work of thy redemption, and art made partaker of the merits of Christ. For the charity of Christ is never diminished, and the greatness of his mercy is never lessened. Therefore

thou

thou oughteſt always to diſpoſe thy ſelf hereunto by a freſh renewing of thy mind, and to weigh with attentive conſideration this great myſtery of thy ſalvation. So great, new, and joyful it ought to ſeem unto thee, when thou ſayeſt, or heareſt Maſs, as if the ſame day Chriſt firſt deſcending into the womb of the Virgin, were become man; or hanging on the Croſs, did ſuffer and dye for the Salvation of mankind.

CHAP. III.

That it is profitable to communicate often.

BEhold, O Lord, I come unto thee that I may be comforted in thy gift and be delighted in thy holy banquet, which thou, O Lord, haſt prepared in thy ſweetneſs, for the poor. Behold in thee is all whatſoever I can, or ought to deſire. Thou art my health, and my redemption, my hope! and my ſtrength, my honour, and my glory. Make joyful therefore this day, the ſoul of thy Servant, for that I have lifted it up to thee my ſweet Jeſus. I deſire to receive thee now with devotion, and reverence. I do long to bring thee into my houſe, that with *Zacheus* I may deſerve to be bleſſed by thee, and numbred, amongſt the Children of *Abraham*. My Soul thriſteth to receive thy Body, my heart

heart desireth to be united with thee.

2. Give thy self to me, and it sufficeth. For besides thee no Comfort is available. I cannot be without thee, nor live without thy visitation. And therefore I must often come unto thee, and receive thee as the only remedy of my health, lest perhaps I faint in the way, if I be deprived of thy Heavenly food. For so most merciful Jesus, thou once didst say, preaching to the people, and curing sundry diseases: I will not send them home fasting lest they faint in the way. Deal thou therefore in like manner now with me, who hast vouchsafed to leave thy self in the Sacrament for the comfort of the faithful. For thou art the sweet refection of the soul, and he that eateth thee worthily, shall be partaker and Heir of everlasting Glory. It is necessary for me, that do so often fall and sin, so quickly wax dull and faint, that by often prayers and confession, and receiving of thy sacred Body, I renew, cleanse, and inflame my self; lest perhaps by long abstaining I fall from my holy purpose.

3. For man is prone unto evil from his youth, and unless this divine remedy help him, he quickly slideth to worse. This holy Communion therefore draweth back from evil, and comforteth in good. For if I be now so often slack and negligent when I communicate, or say Mass, what would become of me, if I received not this remedy, and sought not after so great a help; Though every day I be not fit, nor well

well prepared to say Mass, I will endeavour notwithstanding at convenient times to receive the divine mysteries, and make my self partaker of so great a grace. For this is the only chief comfort of a faithful soul, whilst she wandreth from thee in this mortal Body, that being mindful of her God, she often receive her Beloved with a devout mind.

4. O wonderful benignity of thy mercy towards us, that thou Lord God, the Creator and giver of life to all Spirits, dost vouchsafe to come unto a poor Soul, and with thy whole God-head and Humanity to replenish her hunger. O happy mind, and blessed soul, that deserveth to receive thee, her Lord God, with devout affection, and in receiving of thee to be filled with Spiritual joy! O how great a Lord doth she entertain! How beloved a guest doth she harbour! How pleasant a companion doth she receive! How faithful a friend doth she accept! How beautiful and noble a Spouse doth she embrace! She embraceth him who is to be loved above all that is beloved and all things that may be desired. Let Heaven and Earth and all their beauty be silent in thy presence. For what beauty and praise soever they have, it is received from thy bounty, and shall not equal the beauty of thy Name, of whose wisdom there is no end.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

That many Benefits are bestowed upon them that communicate devoutly.

The Voice of the Disciple.

MY Lord God, prevent thy Servant in the Blessings of thy Sweetness, that I may deserve to approach worthily and devoutly to thy holy Sacrament: Stir up my Heart unto thee, and deliver me from all heaviness and sloath: Visit me with thy Comfort, that I may taste in Spirit thy Sweetness, which plentifully lieth hid in this Sacrament, as a fountain. Give light also to my eyes to behold so great a Mystery, and strengthen me to believe it with undoubted Faith. For it is thy Work, and not Mans power, thy sacred Institution, not Mans Invention. For no Man is of himself able to comprehend and understand these things, which surpass the Understanding even of Angels. What therefore shall I unworthy sinner, dust and ashes, be able to search and comprehend of so high and sacred a Mystery?

2. O Lord, in sincerity of Heart, with a good and firm Faith, and at thy Commandment, I come unto thee with hope and reverence, and do verily believe that thou art here present in the Sacrament, God and Man. Thy holy Pleasure is, that

I receive thee, and by Charity do unite my ſelf unto thee. Wherefore I do recur unto thy Clemency, and do crave ſpecial grace, that I may wholly melt in thee, and abound with love, and hereafter never admit any exterſial comfort. For this moſt high and vvorthy Sacrament, is the health of the Soul and Body, the remedy of all ſpiritual Sickneſs: By it my Vices are cured, my Paſſions bridled, Temptations overcome or vveakned, greater Grace infuſed, Vertue increaſed, Faith confirmed, Hope ſtrengthned, and Charity inflamed and enlarged.

3. For thou haſt beſtowed, and ſtill oftentimes doſt beſtow many Benefits in this Sacrament, upon thy Beloved that do receive it devoutly, my God the Protector of my Soul, the ſtrengthener of humane frailty, the Giver of all inward Comfort. Thou impartest unto them much Comfort againſt ſundry Tribulations, and liftest them up from the depth of their own Baſeneſs, to the hope of thy Protection, and doſt inwardly refreſh and illuſtrate them with a certain new Grace, in ſuch ſort, that they who before Communion have felt themſelves heavy and indiſpoſed, afterwards being ſtrengthened with heavenly Meat and Drink, do find in themſelves a great change to the better. Which thou doſt ſo diſpoſe to thy Elect, that they may truly acknowledge, and patiently prove, how great their own infirmity is, and what Benefit and Grace they receive from thee. For they of themſelves are cold, dull, and

un-

undevout; but by thee they are made fervent, quick, and full of Devotion. For who is there, that approaching humbly unto the Fountain of Sweetness, doth not carry away from thence at least some little Sweetness? Or who standing by a great fire, receiveth not some small heat thereby? Thou art a Fountain always full and overflowing, a Fire ever burning and never decaying.

4. Wherefore if I cannot draw at the full out of this Fountain, nor drink my fill, I will notwithstanding set my lips to the mouth of this heavenly Conduit, that I may draw from thence at least some small drop to refresh my thirst; to the end I wither not wholly away and perish. And although I be not altogether celestial, nor inflamed as the Cherubins and Seraphins, notwithstanding I will endeavour to apply my self to Devotion, and dispose my Heart to obtain some small spark of divine Fire by humble receiving of this life-giving Sacrament. And whatsoever is hereunto wanting in me, good Jesu, most blessed Saviour, do thou supply for me, most benign and gracious Lord, who hast vouchsafed to call us unto thee, saying, Come unto me all ye that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you.

5. I labour in the sweat of my brows, I am vexed with grief of Heart, I am burdened with Sins, I am troubled with Temptations, I am intangled and oppressed with many evil Passions, and there is none to help me, none to deliver and save me, but thou, O Lord, my Saviour, to whom I com-

commit my self and all mine, that thou mayst keep me, and bring me to life everlasting. Receive me to the honour and glory of thy Name, who hast prepared thy Body and Blood to be my Meat and Drink. Grant, Lord God, my Saviour, that by frequenting thy Mysteries, my Zeal and Devotion may increase.

CHAP. V.

Of the Dignity of this Sacrament, and Priestly function.

The Voice of the Disciple.

IF thou hadst angelical Purity, and the Sanctity of St *John* Baptist, thou wert not worthy to receive, nor handle this Sacrament. For it is not within the compass of the deserts of Men, that Man should consecrate and handle the Sacrament of Christ, and receive for Food the Bread of Angels. A great Mystery, and great is the Dignity of Priests, to whom is granted that which is not permitted to the Angels. For Priests onely instituted in the Church, have power to Celebrate and Consecrate the Body of Christ. The Priest is the Minister of God, using the Words of God, by Gods Commandment and appointment, but God is there the principal Author, and invisible Worker, to whom is subject all that he pleaseth, and all that he commandeth, doth obey.

2. Thou

2. Thou oughtest therefore to give more credit to God Almighty in this most excellent Sacrament, than to thy own sense, or to any visible sign. And therefore thou art come unto this Mystery with fear and reverence. Consider attentively with thy self, what that is, whereof the Ministry is delivered unto thee by the imposition of hands of the Bishop. Behold thou art made a Priest, and consecrated to say Mass: See now that in due time thou offer Sacrifice unto God faithfully and devoutly, and carry thy self so, as thou mayst be without reproof. Thou hast not lightned thy burden, but art now bound with a straiter band of Discipline, and art obliged to a more perfect degree of Sanctity. A Priest ought to to be adorned with all kind of vertue, and to give example of good life to others. His conversation should not be according to the ordinary and common proceedings of men, but like to the Angels in Heaven, or to perfect men on Earth.

3. A Priest cloathed in sacred garments is the Vicegerent of Christ, to pray humbly, and with a prostrate mind unto God for himself and the whole people. He hath before and behind the sign of the Cross of our Lord, to the end he may ever remember the Passion of Christ: He beareth the Cross before him in the Vestment, that he may diligently behold the Footsteps of Christ, and fervently endeavour to follow them. He is behind marked with the Cross, that he may patiently suffer for God whatsoever adversities shall be laid upon him by others.

others. He beareth the Cross before, that he may lament his own sins; And the same he hath also behind, that he may with a compassionate heart bewail the offences of others, and know that he is placed as a Mediatour between God and the Sinner. Neither ought he to cease from Prayer and Holy oblation, till he deserve to obtain grace and mercy. When a Priest doth celebrate, he honoureth God, rejoyceth the Angels, edifieth the Church, helpeth the living, giveth rest to the dead, and maketh himself partaker of all good deeds.

CHAP. VI.

An Interrogation of the exercise before Communion.

The voice of the Disciple.

WHen I weigh thy Greatness, O Lord and my unworthiness, I tremble, and am confounded in my self. For if I come not unto thee, I fly from life; and if I unworthily intrude my self, I incur thy displeasure. What therefore shall I do, my God, my helper, and my counsellour in necessity.

2. Teach me the right way, appoint me some brief exercise suitable to this holy mystery of Sacred Communion. For it is good for me to know, how I should reverently and devoutly prepare my heart unto

thee, for the profitable receiving of thy Sacrament, or for the celebrating of so great and divine a Sacrifice.

CHAP. VII.

Of the discussing of our own Conscience, and purpose of amendment.

The voice of the Beloved.

ABove all things, the Priest of God ought to come to celebrate, handle, and receive this Sacrament with great humility of heart, and lowly reverence, with a full faith, and a Godly desire of the Honoucur of the Divine Majesty. Examine diligently thy Conscience, and to thy power purge and cleanse it with true contrition, and humble confession: So as there may be nothing in thee, that may be burdensome unto thee, or that may breed in thee remorse of conscience, and hinder thy free access to these Heavenly Mysteries. Repent thee of all thy sins in general and in particular bewail thy daily offences. And if thou hast time, confess unto God in the secret of thy heart, all the miseries of thy disordered passions.

2. Lament and grieve, that thou art yet so subject to sensuality, and so addicted to the World, so unmortified in thy passions, so full of the motions of concupiscence, so unwatchful over thy outward senses,

senses, so often intangled with many vain fantasies. So vehemently enclined to outward things, so negligent in the interiour, so prone to laughter and immodesty, so hard to tears and compunction, so prompt to ease and pleasures of the flesh, so dull to austerity and fervour, so curious to hear news and see vain sights, so slack to embrace that which tends to thy own humiliation and contempt, so covetous of abundance, so niggardly in giving, so fast in keeping, so inconsiderate in speech, so unbridled to silence, so loose in manners, so outrageous in deeds, so greedy to meat, so deaf to the Word of God, so hasty to rest, so slow to labour, so watchful to tales, so drowsie to watch in the service of God, so hasty to the end thereof, so inconstant in attention, so negligent in saying thy Office, so undevout in saying Mass, so dry in receiving, so quickly distracted, so seldom wholly recollected, so suddenly moved to anger, so apt to take displeasure against another, so prone to judge, so severe to reprehend, so joyful in prosperity, so weak in adversity, so often purposing much good, and performing little.

3. These and other thy defects confessed, and bewailed with sorrow and great dislike of thy own infirmity, make a firm purpose always to amend thy self, and to go forwards in Vertue. Then with full resignation, and with thy whole Will, offer thy self up to the honour of my Name, a perpetual Sacrifice in the Altar of thy Heart, faithfully committing thy Body and

Soul unto me, that thou mayst so also deserve to come worthily to offer Sacrifice unto God, and to receive profitably the Sacrament of my Body.

4. For there is no Oblation more worthy, nor Satisfaction greater, for the washing away of Sins, than to offer up our selves unto God, purely and wholly with the Oblation of the Body of Christ in the Mass, and in Communion. And when a Man shall have done what lieth in him, and shall be truely penitent: I live, saith our Lord, who will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he be converted and live: I will not remember his sins any more, but they shall be all forgiven him, and fully pardoned.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Oblation of Christ on the Cross, and resignation of ourselves.

The Voice of the Beloved.

AS I willingly offered up my self unto God my Father, with my hands stretched forth on the Cross, and my Body naked for thy sins, so that nothing remained in me that was not turned into a Sacrifice, for the appeasing of the divine Wrath, so ought'st thou also to offer up thy self willingly unto me daily in the Mass, as a pure and holy Oblation, and with thy whole force and desire, in as hearty a manner as thou canst. What

do

do I require of thee more, than that thou resign thy self wholly unto me? Whatsoever thou giveſt beſides thy ſelf, is of little account in my ſight, for I ſeek not thy gift, but thee.

2 As it would not ſuffice thee to have all things whatſoever beſides me; ſo neither can it pleaſe me whatſoever thou giveſt, if thou offereſt not up thy ſelf. Offer thy ſelf unto me; and give thy ſelf, and all that thou art to God, and thy Offering ſhall be grateful. Behold I offered up my ſelf wholly unto my Father for thee, and gave my whole Body and Blood for thy food, that I might be wholly thine, and thou remain mine. But if thou abideſt in thy ſelf, and doſt not offer thy ſelf up freely unto my Will, thy Oblation is not entire, neither ſhall the union between us be perfect: therefore a free offering up of thy ſelf into the hands of God, ought to go before all thy Actions, if thou wilt obtain freedom and Grace. For this cauſe ſo few become inwardly illuminated, and enjoy true liberty of Heart, for that they do not reſolve wholly to deny themſelves My ſaying is undoubtedly true: Unleſs one forſake all, he cannot be my Diſciple. If thou therefore wish to be mine, offer up thy ſelf unto me with thy whole deſires.

CHAP. IX.

That we ought to offer up ourselves, and all that is ours unto God, and to pray for all.

The Voice of the Disciple.

THine, O Lord, are all things that are in Heaven, and in Earth. I desire to offer up my self unto thee, as a free Oblation, and to remain always thine. O Lord, in sincerity of my Heart I offer my self unto thee this day, in sacrifice of perpetual praise, to be thy servant forever. Receive me with this holy Oblation of thy precious Body, which in the presence of the Angels invisibly attending here upon thee. I offer up this day unto thee, that it may be to the health of my Soul, and the Salvation of all thy people.

2. I offer unto thee, O Lord, all my Sins and Offences, which I have committed in thy sight, and in the sight of thy holy Angels, from the day wherein I first could sin, to this hour, upon thy holy Altar; that thou mayst consume and burn them all with the fire of thy Charity, and wash out all the stains of my Sins, and cleanse my Conscience from all Offence, and restore to me again thy Grace, which I lost by sin, forgiving me

me all my Offences, and receiving me mercifully in the kiss of peace.

3. What can I do for my sins, but humbly confess and bewail them, and intreat always for mercy without intermission? I beseech thee, hear me in thy abundant mercy, when I stand before thee my God. All my sins are very displeasing unto me; I will never commit them any more; but I am sorry, and will be sorry for them as long as I live, and am ready to do penance, and to satisfie them to the uttermost of my power. Forgive me, O God, forgive me my sins for thy holy Names sake; save my Soul which thou hast redeemed with thy most precious Blood. Behold I commit my self unto thy mercy, I resign my self over into thy hands. Do with me according to thy goodness, not according to my wickedness and manifold iniquity.

4. I offer up also unto thee all whatsoever is good in me, although it be very little and imperfect, that thou mayst amend and sanctifie it, that thou mayst make it grateful and acceptable unto thee, and always perfect more and more that which thou hast begun, and bring me also, who am a loathful and unprofitable Creature, to a good and blessed end.

5. I offer up also unto thee all the godly Desires of devout persons, the necessities of my Parents, and Friends, my Brethren and Sisters, and of all those that are dear unto me, and that have done good either to me or to others for thy love, and that have desired me to say Mass, and pray for them

and all others, whether they be yet alive, or dead already: That they all may receive the help of thy grace and comfort, protection from dangers, delivery from pain, and being freed from all evils, may joyfully give worthy thanks to thee.

6. I offer up also unto thee my Prayers, and Sacrifices, especially for them who have in any things, wronged, grieved, or slandered me, or have done me any damage or displeasure; and for those also, whom I have at any time grieved, troubled, and scandalized by words or deeds, willingly, or unawares: That it may please thee to forgive us all our sins and offences, one against the other. Take, O Lord, from our Hearts all jealousie and indignation, wrath and contention, and what soever may hurt Charity, and weaken brotherly love. Have mercy, O Lord, have mercy on those that crave thy mercy; give Grace unto them, that stand in need thereof, and grant that we may be worthy to enjoy thy Grace, and attain to life everlasting. *Amen.*

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

That the holy Communion is not lightly to be forborn.

The voice of the Beloved.

THou oughteſt often to have recourſe to the Fountain of grace, and of divine mercy, to the Fountain of goodneſs, and of all piety, that thou maiſt be cured of thy ſins and paſſions, and deſerve to be made more ſtrong and vigilant againſt all temptations and deceits of the Devil: The enemy knowing the greateſt profit, and remedy to conſiſt in the holy Communion, endeavoureth by all means, and occaſions to withdraw and hinder faithful and devout perſons from it.

2. Some, when they purpoſe to receive the Sacred Communion, ſuffer greateſt aſſaults of the Devil. For that wicked ſpirit (as is written in *Job*) cometh amongſt the Sons of God, to trouble them with his accuſtomed malice and impiety, or to make them over-fearful and perplexed, that ſo he may diminiſh their affection, or by ſubtile aſſaults, take away their faith, to the end they may either altogether abſtain from this divine food, or at leaſt come unto it with leſs devotion. But there is no heed to be taken of his frauds and malicious ſuggeſtions, be they never ſo filthy and hideous

hideous, but all is to be turned back upon his own head. We ought to contemn and scorn him, miserable wretch. and not to omit the sacred Communion for his assaults, and the troubles which he raiseth.

3. Oftentimes also an excessive care for the obtaining of devotion and a certain anxiety for the making of our confession hindreth us. Follow in these occasions the counsel of the wise, and put away all anxiety and scruple; for it hindreth the grace of God, and overthroweth devotion. Omit not for every small vexation of the mind which happeneth, to receive this holy Sacrament, but go presently to confession, and willingly forgive others, whatsoever offences they have done against thee: And if thou hast offended any, humbly crave pardon, and God will willingly forgive thee.

4. What availeth it to delay confession, and to defer receiving? Purge thy self with speed, spit out the venome presently, make hast to take a remedy, and thou shalt find it better, than if thou deferredest it long. If thou omittest it to day for this cause, perhaps to morrow some greater will fall out, and so thou maist be hindred a long time from these divine mysteries, and become more unfit. Stir up thy self, and shake off all heavines and sloth with the greatest force and speed thou canst. For it profiteth nothing to continue long in disquietnes and trouble of mind, and for daily occurring impediments to withdraw thy self from the Sacraments. Yea it hurteth

eth very much to defer Communion long, for it is wont to breed a great and dangerous dulneſs. Alas! Some cold and diſſolute people, do willingly delay their confeſſion, and do therefore defer the ſacred Communion, leſt they ſhould be bound to greater watch over themſelves.

5. O how little Charity and weak Devotion have they that ſo eaſily omit the receiving of theſe holy Myſteries? How happy is he and grateful to God, who ordereth ſo his life, and keepeth his conſcience in ſuch purity, that he may be ready, and fit to communicate every day, if it were convenient, and might be done without note. If any one ſometimes abſtains out of humility, or by reaſon of ſome lawful impediment, he is to be commended for the reverence which therein he meweth. But if it proceedeth of coldneſs, he muſt ſtir himſelf up, and do what lieth in him, and God will proſper his deſire for the good will he hath to do it, which God doth chiefly reſpect.

6. And when any lawful hindrance doth happen, he muſt alwayes have yet a good will, and loving deſire to Communicate, and ſo ſhall he not loſe the fruit of the Sacrament. For a devout perſon may every day and hour profitably and without let receive Chriſt Spritually: And yet on certain dayes, and at times appointed he ought to receive Sacramentally with a reverent deſire the Body of his Redeemer, and rather ſeek the honour and glory of God, than his own comfort. For he Communicateth

nicateth mystically and is invisibly fed, as often as he devoutly calleth to mind the Mystery of the Incarnation, and the Passion of Christ, and is inflamed with his love.

7. He that prepareth not himself, but when a feast draweth near, and when custom compelleth him thereunto, shall often be unprepared. Blessed is he that offereth himself up as an Holocaust and burnt offering to our Lord, as often as he doth celebrate or communicate. Be not too long nor too short in saying Mass, but keep the accustomed manner of those with whom thou livest. Thou oughtest not to be tedious and troublesome to others, but to observe the common course according to the appointment of thy Superiours: And rather frame thy self to the profit of others, than to thy own devotion or desire.

CHAP. XI.

That the Body of Christ, and the holy Scriptures, are most necessary unto a faithful Soul.

The voice of the Disciple.

O Most sweet Lord Jesu, how great is the delight of a devout soul that feasteth with thee in thy banquet, where there is no other meat offered to be eaten, but thy self her only Beloved, and most to be desired above all the desires of her heart.

And

And verily it would be a great comfort unto me, to pour out tears from the bottom of my heart in thy presence, and with devout *Magdalen* to wash thy feet with the tears of my eyes. But where is this devotion? Where is so plentiful shedding of of holy tears? Surely in the sight of thee and thy holy Angels, my whole heart should be inflamed and dissolve into tears for joy. For I enjoy thee in the Sacrament really present, although hidden under another form.

2. For to behold thee in thy own Divine Brightness, my eye would not be able to endure it, neither could the whole World stand in the clearness of the glorie of thy Majestie. Thou therefore provideſt for my weakness in that thou covereſt thy self under the Sacrament. I do really enjoy and adore him, whom the Angels adore in Heaven; but I, as yet for the time, in faith; they in his proper form, and without shadow. I ought to be content with the light of true Faith, and to walk therein, until the day of everlasting Brightness break forth, and the shaddows of figures pass away. But when that shall come which is perfect, the use of Sacraments shall cease. For the Blessed in Heavenly Glorie need not the remedie of Sacraments, who rejoyce without end in the presence of God, beholding His Glorie face to face, and being transformed by his brightness into the brightness of the incomprehensible Deity. They tast the word of God made flesh, as he was from the beginning, and as he remaineth for ever.

3. Whilst

3. Whilst I remember these thy wonderful Works, all spiritual comfort whatsoever becometh very tedious unto me: For that as long as I behold not my Lord openly in his Glory, I make no account of whatsoever I see or hear in this Life. Thou art my Witness, O God, that nothing can comfort me, no Creature can give me rest, but thou my God, whom I desire to behold everlastingly. But this is not possible whilst I remain in this mortal Life. Therefore I must frame my self to much patience, and submit my self to thee in all my desires: For thy Saints also, O Lord, who now rejoyce with thee in the Kingdom of Heaven, whilst they lived, expected in Faith and great patience the coming of thy Glory. What they believed, I believe: What they hoped for, I expect: Whither they are come, I trust I shall come by thy Grace. In the mean time, I will go forward in Faith, strengthned by the examples of the Saints. I have also devout Books for my comfort, and for the guide of my Life, and above all these, thy most holy Body for a singular remedy and refuge.

4. For I perceive two things to be chiefly necessary for me in this Life, without which this miserable Life would be insupportable unto me. Whilst I am kept in the prison of this Body, I acknowledge my self to stand in need of two things, to wit, food, and light. Thou hast therefore given unto me, weak Creature, thy sacred Body for the refection of my Soul and Body; and hast set thy Word as a light unto my

my feet; without these two I could not well live For the Word of God is the light of the Soul, and thy Sacrament the Bread of Life. These also may be called the two Tables set on the one side and the other, in the store-house of the holy Church. One is the Table of the holy Altar, containing the sacred Bread, that is, the precious Body of Christ: The other is of the divine Law, containing holy Doctrine, teaching true Faith, and certainly leading to the part of the Temple within the Veil, where are the Holy of Holies. Thanks be unto thee, Lord Jesus, light of everlasting light, for thy Table of holy Doctrine, at which thou serveſt us by thy Servants, the Prophets and Apostles, and other Doctors.

5. Thanks be unto thee, Creator and Redeemer of Man, who to manifeſt thy Charity to the whole World, haſt prepared a greater Supper, wherein thou haſt offered to be eaten, not the myſtical Lamb, but thy own moſt sacred Body and Blood, rejoycing all the faithful with thy holy Banquet, and repleniſhing them to the full with the heavenly Cup, in which are all the delights of Heaven, and the holy Angels do feaſt with us, but with a more happy ſweetneſs.

6. O how great and honourable is the Office of Prieſts, to whom it is granted with sacred Words to conſecrate the Lord of Majeſty, with their lips to bleſs him, with their hands to hold him, with their own mouth to receive him, and to adminiſter him to others? O how clean ought

to be those hands, how pure that mouth how holy the body, how unspotted the heart of the Priest, in whom the Author of Purity so often entreth! Nothing but Holy, no word but chast and profitable ought to proceed from the mouth of the Priest, which so often receiveth the Sactament of Christ.

7. Simple and chaste ought to be the eyes, that are wont to behold the Body of Christ; the hands pure and lifted up to Heaven, that use to handle the Creator of Heaven and Earth. Unto the Priests especially it is said in the Law: Be ye holy, for that I your Lord God am holy.

8. Assist us, Almightie God, with thy Grace, that we, who have undertaken the Office of Priesthood, may serve thee worthily and devoutly in all purity, and with a sincere Conscience. And if we cannot live in so great innocency as we ought to do, grant us notwithstanding in due manner, to bewail the sins which we have committed, and in the spirit of humility, and sincere intention to serve thee hereafter with more fervour.

CHAP. XII.

That he who is to communicate, ought to prepare himself with great diligence.

The Voice of the Beloved.

I Am the lover of purity, and the giver of all ſanctity. I ſeek a pure Heart, and there is the place of my reſt. Make ready and adorn for me a great Chamber, and I will make with thee the Paſch with my Diſciples. If thou wilt have me come unto thee, and remain with thee, purge the old leaven, and make clean the dwelling of thy Heart: Shut out the whole World, and all tumult of Vices: Sit like a Sparrow ſolitary upon the Houſe top, and think of thy Offences in the bitterneſs of thy Soul. For every lover prepareth the beſt and faireſt Room for his Beloved, and herein is known the Affection of him that entertaineth his Beloved.

2. Know thou notwithſtanding, that the worth of no action of thine, is able to make this preparation ſufficient, although thou ſhouldſt prepare thy ſelf a whole year together, and think on nothing elſe, but of my Mercy and Grace onely. Thou art ſuffered to come to my Table, like a Beggar invited to Dinner to a rich Man, who hath nothing elſe to return him for his Benefits, but to humble himſelf, and give him thanks.

thanks. Do what lieth in thee, and do it diligently; not for custom, nor for necessity, but with fear and reverence, and heartie affection receive the Body of thy belovep Lord and God, who vouchsafeth to come unto thee. I am he that have called thee, I have commanded it to be done, I will supply what is wanting in thee: Come and receive me

3. When I bestow the Grace of Devotion on thee, give thanks to God; for it is given thee, not for that thou deserveſt it, but because I have mercy on thee. If thou have it not, but rather feel thy self dry, continue in Prayer, sigh and knock, and give not over until thou deserve to receive some crum or drop of Grace. Thou hast need of me, not I of thee, neither comeſt thou to sanctifie me, but I come to sanctifie and make thee better. Thou comeſt that thou maiſt be sanctified by me, and united unto me, that thou maiſt receive new Grace, and be stirred up again to amendment; Neglect not this Grace, but prepare thy Heart with all diligence, and receive thy Beloved into thy Soul.

4. But thou oughteſt not onely to prepare thy self to Devotion before Communion, but carefully also to conserve thy self therein, after thou hast received the Sacrament. Neither is the careful guard of thy self after less exacted, than devout preparation before. For a good guard afterwards, is the best preparation thou canſt make for the obtaining again of greater Grace, because that Mans Mind becometh very

very indiſpoſed, if he preſently pour himſelf out to outward comforts. Beware of much talk, remain in ſome ſecret place, and enjoy thy God. For thou haſt him whom all the World cannot take from thee. I am he, to whom thou oughteſt wholly to give thy ſelf, that ſo thou maiſt live hereafter, not in thy ſelf, but in me, without all care.

CHAP. XIII.

That a devout Soul ought to deſire with her whole Heart to be united unto Chriſt in the Bleſſed Sacrament.

The Voice of the Diſciple.

HOw may I obtain this, O Lord, that I may find thee alone, and open my whole Heart unto thee, and enjoy thee as my Soul deſireth? And that no man may look upon me, nor any Creature move me or reſpect me, but thou alone maiſt ſpeak unto me, and I to thee, as the Beloved is wont to ſpeak to his Beloved, and a Friend to Banquet with his Friend. This I pray for, this I deſire, that I may be wholly united unto thee, and may withdraw my Heart from all created things, and more by ſacred Communion and often celebrating, learn to taſte of heavenly and everlaſting ſweetneſs. O Lord God, when ſhall I be wholly united and abſorpt by thee, and alto-

altogether forgetful of my self! Thou in me, and I in thee! And so grant us both to continue in one.

2. Thou art my Beloved, the choicest among thousands, in whom my Soul hath taken pleasure to dwell all the daies of her life. Thou art my Peace-maker in whom is greatest peace, and true rest, without whom is labour and sorrow, and infinite misery. Thou art a hidden God, and thy Counsel is not with the Wicked, but thy Speech is with the humble and simple of Heart. O Lord, how sweet is thy Spirit, who to the end thou mightest shew thy sweetness towards thy Children, vouchsafest to feed them with the most delightsom Bread, which descendeth from Heaven, and is full of all sweetness. Surely there is no other Nation so great that hath Gods approaching unto them, as thou our God art present to all thy faithful, unto whom for their daily comfort, and for the lifting up their Hearts to Heaven, thou giveſt thy self to be eaten and enjoyed.

3. For what other Nation is there so famous, as the Christian people? Or what Creator under Heaven so beloved as a devout Soul, to whom God himself cometh to feed her with his glorious Flesh? O unspeakable Grace! O admirable Favour! O infinite Love, singularly bestowed upon Man! But what shall I give unto our Lord in return of this Grace, for so singular a Charity? There is no other thing more grateful that I am able to give, than to bestow my Heart wholly on my God, and to unite

unite it perfectly unto him. Then shall all my Bowels rejoyce, when my Soul shall be perfectly united unto God. Then he will say unto me, If thou wilt be with me, I will be with thee. And I will answer him, Vouchsafe, O Lord, to remain with me, and I will be with thee. This is my whole desire, that my Heart be united unto thee.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the fervent desire of some devout persons to receive the Body of Christ.

The Voice of the Disciple.

O How great is the store of thy sweetness, O Lord, which thou hast hidden for them that fear thee! When I remember these devout persons who come unto thy Sacrament, O Lord, with great devotion and affection, I am oftentimes confounded, and blush within my self, that I come so negligently and coldly to thy Altar, to thy Table of holy Communion: That I remain so dry, and without spiritual motion pre-feeling, that I am not wholly inflamed in thy presence, my God, nor so earnestly drawn and moved, as many devout persons have been, who out of a vehement desire of receiving, and a feeling affection of Heart, could not contain themselves from weeping, but with the desire both of Soul and Body, they earnestly longed

ged after thee, O God, the living Fountain; being not otherwise able to temper nor satisfie their hunger but by receiving thy Body with all joy and spiritual greediness

2. O most ardent Faith of those persons, a profitable argument of thy sacred presence! For they truly know their Lord in the breaking of Bread, whose Heart burneth so within them, whilst thou, O blessed Jesu, walkest with them. Such desire and Devotion, so vehement love and fervency is oftentimes far from me. Be merciful unto me, good Jesu, sweet and benign Lord, and grant me thy poor needy creature, to feel sometimes, at least in this holy Sacrament, a little cordial desire of thy love; that my Faith may be more strengthned, my hope in thy goodness increased, and that my Charity once perfectly inflamed, after the tasting of heavenly Manna may never decay.

3. Thy mercy, O Lord, is able to give me the Grace I desire, and to visit me in thy bounteous Clemency, with the Spirit of fervour, when it shall please thee. For although I burn not with so great desire as those that are so especially devoted unto thee: Yet notwithstanding by thy grace, I desire to have this great inflamed desire, praying and craving that I may participate with all such thy fervent Lovers, and be numbered among them in their holy Company.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

That the grace of Devotion is obtained by humility, and denial of our selves.

The voice of the Beloved.

THou oughtest to seek the grace of devotion instantly, to ask it earnestly, to expect it patiently and confidently, to receive it joyfully, to keep it humbly, to work with it diligently, and to commit the time and manner of this Heavenly Visitation to God, until it shall be his pleasure to come. Thou oughtest chiefly to humble thy self, when thou feelest inwardly little or no devotion, and yet not to be too much dejected, nor to grieve inordinately for it. God often giveth in a short moment that, which he hath long time denied: He giveth sometimes in the end that, which in the beginning of Prayer he deferred to grant.

2. If grace should be alwayes presently given, and at hand ever with a wish, it could not be well endured by a weak man. Therefore devotion is to be expected with good hope, and humble patience: Yet impute it to thy self, and thy sins, when it is not given thee, or when it is secretly taken from thee. It is sometimes a small matter that hindreth, and hideth grace from us, if it be to be called small, and not

not rather a great matter, that hindreth so great a good. And if thou remove this, be it great or small, and perfectly overcome it, thou shalt have thy desire.

3. For presently as soon as thou givest thy self to God, and seekest not this nor that, for thy own pleasure or will, but settlest thy self wholly in me, thou shalt find thy self united unto him, and quiet. For nothing will taste so well and please thee so much, as the will and pleasure of God. Whosoever therefore with a sincere heart directeth his intention to God, and purgeth himself from all inordinate love, or dislike of any creature, shall be most fit to receive grace, and worthie of the gift of devotion. For our Lord bestoweth his blessings there, where he findeth his vessels emptie. And how much the more perfectly one forsaketh those baseſt things, and dieth to himself by contempt of himself: So much the more speedily grace cometh, and entreth in more plentifully, and lifteth up the heart that is free, to higher state of grace.

4. Then shall he see, and abound, and wonder, and his heart shall be enlarged, because the hand of our Lord is with him, and he hath put himself wholly into his hand for ever. Behold so shall the Man be blessed that seeketh Almightie God with his whole heart, and taketh not his name in vain. This man deserveth great grace of divine union, in receiving the Holy Eucharist, for that he regardeth not his own Devotion and Comfort, but above all devotion

votion and Comfort, he prizeth the Honour and Glorie of God.

CHAP. XVI.

That we ought to manifest our necessities to Christ, and to crave his Grace.

The Voice of the Disciple.

O Most sweet and loving Lord, whom I now desire to receive devoutly, thou knowest my infirmitie and the necessitie which I endure; with how many sins I am oppressed, how often I am grieved, tempted, troubled, and defiled. I come unto thee for remedie, I crave of thee thy Heavenly Comfort, and the ease of my pain. I speak to him that knoweth all things, to whom all my secrets are open, and who can only perfectly comfort and help me. Thou knowest what it is, whereof above all things I stand in most need, and how poor I am in vertues.

2. Behold I stand before thee, poor and naked, calling for Grace, and craving mercy. Refresh this thy hungry and needy creature, give heat unto my coldness with the fire of thy love; give light unto my blindness with the brightness of thy presence. Turn all earthly things unto me, into bitterness, all things grievous and contrary, into patience, all base and created things, into contempt and oblivion.

Lift up my heart to thee in Heaven, and suffer me not to wander upon Earth: Be thou only sweet and delightsome unto me from henceforth for evermore, for thou only art my meat and my drink, my love and my joy, my delight and all my good.

3. O that with thy presence thou wouldest wholly inflame, burn and change me into thee, that I might be made one Spirit with thee by the grace of inward union and melting of burning Love! Suffer me not to go from thee hungrie and drie, but deal mercifully, with me, as thou hast oftentimes dealt wonderfully with thy Saints. What marvel if I should be wholly inflamed by thee, and die in my self, since thou art fire burning and never decaying. Love purifying the heart, and inlightning the understanding.

CHAP. XVII.

Of burning Love and Vehement desire to receive Christ.

The Voice of the Disciple.

With great devotion and burning love, with most heartie affection and fervour I desire to receive thee. O Lord, as many Saints and devout persons have desired thee, when they received thy Sacrament, who were most pleasing unto thee in holiness of life, and most fervent in devotion

votion. O my God, my everlasting love, my whole good, my happiness without end, I would gladly receive thee with the most vehement desire, and worthie reverence, that any of the Saints ever had, or could feel.

2. And although I be unworthie to have all those feelings of devotion, yet I offer unto thee the whole affection of my heart, as if I alone had those most sweet inflamed desires: Yea whatsoever also a devout mind can conceive and desire, all that, with greatest reverence, and most inward affection I offer and present unto thee. I wish to desire nothing my self, but freely and most willingly to sacrifice my self and all mine unto thee my Lord God, my Creator, and my Redeemer. I desire to receive thee this day with such affection, reverence, praise, and honour, with such gratitude, worthiness, and love, with such faith, hope, and puritie as thy most blessed Mother, the glorious Virgin *Mary* received, and desired thee, when She humbly and devoutly answered the Angel, who declared unto her the Mysterie of thy Incarnation and said: Behold the Hand-maid of our Lord, let it be done unto me according to thy word.

3. And as thy blessed Fore-runner, the most excellent amongst the Saints, *John* Baptist, cheerfully leaped with joy of the Holy Ghost, whilst he was yet shut up in his Mothers Womb; and afterwards seeing Jesus walking amongst men, humbling himself very much, said with devot af-

section: The friend of the Bridgroom that standeth and heareth him, rejoyceth with joy for the voice of the Bridgroom: So I also wish to be inflamed with great and holy desires and to offer my self up to thee with my whole heart. Wherefore I offer also and present unto thee the joyes, fervent desires, excesses of mind, spiritual illuminations, and Heavenly visions of all devout hearts, with all the vertues and praises exercised, and to be exercised by all Creatures in Heaven and Earth, for my self, and all such as are commended to me in Prayer, that by all thou maist be worthily praised, and glorified for ever.

4. Receive my Lord God, the affections of my Heart, and the desires of infinite praise and thanks, which according to the measure of thy unspeakable greatness are due unto thee. These I yeild thee, and desire to yeild thee every day and moment: I do intreat and invite all the Heavenly Spirits; and all thy devout servants to give thanks and praises together with me.

5. Let all People, Tribes, and Tongues praise thee, and magnifie thy holy and sweet name with great joy, and fervent devotion, and let all that reverently and devoutly celebrate thy most high Sacrament, and receive it with full faith, deserve to find grace, and mercie at thy hands, and pray humbly for me sinful creature, and when they shall have obtained their desired devotion and joyful union, and depart from th Sacred Heavenly Table well confirmed and marvelously refreshed, let them

them vouchsafe to remember my poor and needie Soul.

CHAP. XVIII.

That Man must not be a curious searcher of this Sacrament, but an humble follower of Christ, submitting his sense unto faith.

The Voice of the Beloved.

THou oughtest to beware of curious and unprofitable searching into this most profound Sacrament, if thou wilt not sink into the depth of doubt. He that is a searcher of Majestie, shall be oppressed by glorie. God is able to work more than man can understand. A pious and humble inquirie of truth is tolerable, so he be alwayes readie to be taught, and do endeavour to walk in the sound paths of the ancient Fathers Doctrine.

2. Blessed in that simplicitie, that forsaketh the difficult wayes of questions, and goeth on in the plain assured path of Gods Commandments. Many have lost devotion, whilst they would search after high things. Faith and sincere life are exacted at thy hands, not height of understanding, not the depth of the Mysteries of God. If thou dost not understand, nor conceive those things that are under thee, how shalt thou be able to comprehend those that are

above thee? Submit thy self to God, and let thy Sense be subject to faith. and the light of knowledge shall be given thee in that degree; as shall be profitable and necessarie for thee.

3. Some are grievously tempted about Faith and the Sacrament: But this is not to be imputed to them, but rather to the Enemie. Do not regard nor dispute with thy thoughts, neither do thou give answer to the doubts moved by the Enemie, but believe the words of God, believe His Saints and Prophets, and the wicked Serpent will fly from thee. It is oftentimes verie profitable to the Servant of God to suffer such things. For he tempteth not Infidels and Sinners; whom He already securely possesseth, but he sundrie wayes tempteth and vexeth the Faithful and Devour.

4. Go forward therefore with a sincere and undoubted Faith, and come to the Sacrament with unfeigned reverence, and whatsoever thou art not able to understand, commit securely to Almightie God. God deceiveth thee not: He is deceived that trusteth too much to himself. God walketh with the simple, revealeth himself to the Humble, giveth understanding to little ones, openeth the Senses of pure minds, and hideth grace from the curious and proud. Humane reason is weak, and may be deceived, but true Faith cannot be deceived.

5. All reason and natural search ought to follow Faith, not to go before it, nor impugn

impugn it. For Faith and Love do chiefly excel, and work in a hidden manner in this most blessed and excellent Sacrament. God, who is everlasting, and of infinite power, doth great and inscrutable things in Heaven and in Earth, and there is no searching of his wonderful Works. If the Works of God were such as might be easily comprehended by humane reason, they were not to be called wonderful and unspeakable.

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